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## *THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

FEW phenomena in human history are more worthy of study, or more deeply interesting, than those presented by the prophets of the Old Testament, whether we look at these men as heroic characters, as inspired messengers of God, as public speakers, as sacred writers, or as the earliest preachers of eternal religious truth, and of the noblest life for man. An Elijah and a Jeremiah have been for more than two thousand years to progressive humanity the types of fearless and faithful devotion to the cause of God. In the nineteenth century we still think of our most inspired men as having received the mantle of the Prophets, though, like Elisha, they inherit but "two-thirds" \* of the spirit of their greater prototypes. Echoes of the eloquence of an Isaiah form not only the most powerful passages of the princes of pulpit orators, but lend force and majesty to the noblest outbursts of such great prophet-reformers as Savonarola and Luther and of such tribunes of the people as John Bright. The works of those prophets which have been preserved in the Old Testament may without any exaggeration be pronounced the weightiest and most influential pieces of writing which the world possesses; for

\* 2 Kings ii. 9, 10. Comp. Ewald's *History of Israel*, iv. p. 81.

without them Christianity would have been an entirely different thing, or, rather, wholly impossible, and the New Testament would not have been written. As the representatives of the religion of Yahveh, and being therefore men who could not rest save in its progressive development and final consummation and victory, the prophets were the heralds of Christianity as the perfect religion and the noblest ideal of life. As the Hebrew Prophets were all this, and indeed more than this, it follows that to get an intimate acquaintance with them and their work, must not only be a most instructive study in every way, and exercise a most elevating influence on the student, but must also be indispensable as the preliminary to a true appreciation of Christianity itself. Unfortunately, false ideas of the nature of Hebrew prophecy had until recently quite concealed the true character, greatness, and import of these noble heroes of the race. One of the most invaluable contributions of modern Biblical research to a rediscovery and correct appreciation of Hebrew history, and thereby to the preparation for Christianity, has been the resuscitation of the prophets and their works; and all schools of critics admit that it is Ewald above all other scholars to whom this resuscitation is due.\*

The Old Testament itself supplies us with the names, and, in some instances, with accounts of the lives of upwards of twenty Hebrew prophets and prophetesses from whom no writings have been preserved. The Hebrew Bible contains sixteen prophetic books, long supposed to have been all written by the men whose names they now bear; but critical examination has shown that in those sixteen books we have really the works, or fragments of works, of nearly

\* This article is therefore based mainly upon his great work, *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes*, which is referred to in the English edition (London, 1875—1882), and his latest treatment of the subject in his last work, *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*. Vol. I. (1871). Dr. Robertson Smith's excellent work, *The Prophets of Israel and their Place in History to the Close of the Eighth Century B.C.* (Edinburgh, 1882), has also been used, as well as Reuss's *Die Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften Alten Testaments*. (Braunschweig, 1881.)



thirty prophets. But these prophets, some fifty in number, whose names or writings have thus been preserved from oblivion, were but a few distinguished individuals from an incomparably more numerous class. It was a constitutional principle in Israel that every man and woman had the right to come forward publicly as prophet or prophetess, should he or she feel the divine call (Amos vii. 14, 15; Num. xi. 25—29; Deut. xviii. 15—21), and the fact that they had always had a large number of prophets, was regarded as one of Israel's great privileges (Hos. xii. 10). We meet with guilds of prophets in the eleventh century, in the time of Samuel (1 Sam. x. 5 sq.; xix. 20 sq.), and two centuries later, in the time of Elijah (2 Kings ii. 3—5; iv. 1, 38 sq.), and again probably, a century later still, in the time of the prophet Amos (vii. 14). We find Isaiah gathering a circle of prophetic disciples around him (viii. 16). As time went on we see the faithful prophets of Yahveh increasingly in bitter conflict with overwhelming numbers of unfaithful brethren.\* The historical books also refer to facts which imply that they were always a numerous profession. At last Jeremiah and Ezekiel bitterly complain of the excessive number and the degeneration of the prophets and prophetesses of their times (Jer. xxiii. 9—40; Ezek. xiii.).

In this paper we are concerned solely with those few distinguished prophets from whom writings have been preserved, and we need not enter upon the difficult, and as yet unsettled question of the points of difference between them and the pseudo-prophets. We have ample reason for regarding the authors of the prophetic writings in the Old Testament as the truest and noblest representatives of the Hebrew prophets, and for finding in their preserved writings the most authentic and faithful records of their character and work.

The Greek word *prophet*, by which this distinguished class of Hebrew speakers and writers has been introduced

\* Hos. ix. 7, 8; Isa. iii. 2, viii. 19, xxviii. 7; Mic. ii. 11, iii. 5, 11; Jer. xxiii. 14 sq., xxviii. 15, v. 31, vi. 13, viii. 10, xxvi. 7, 8.

† 1 Kings xviii. 4; 2 Kings xxi. 16; Neh. ix. 26; comp. Jer. ii. 30.

to the European and western world, represents fairly enough, when properly understood, the generic Hebrew and Eastern name *nābi*. That is, both words denote a man whose mission it is to speak and proclaim the Word of God,\* to make known the divine mind and will to men. In addition to this generic term, several others occur in the Old Testament, and they all describe characteristic features of the prophet's relation to God and his work amongst men. Thus he is "the man of the spirit" (Hos. ix. 7), or the inspired man; he is the "seer" who has the purest and highest views of God, and beholds things hidden from the common eye (Amos vii. 12); he is "the man of God" as nearer to Him than ordinary men (Jer. xxxv. 4; comp. 1 Sam. ii. 27, ix. 6 sq.; 1 Kings xiii.); he is the "messenger of Yahveh" (Hag. i. 13) who must run on the errand of his God; he is in a spiritual sense "the servant of God" ("Isa." xlii. 26, l. 10); he is the "watchman" and the "outlooker," who must be constantly, night and day, watching the course of human affairs and looking out for the first indication of the divine will ("Isa." xxi. 11, 12, lii. 8; Mic. vii. 4; Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17, xxxiii. 2-7; Hab. i. 3); or again the "shepherd," who must carefully and unweariedly guard his flock (Zech. xi. 5 sq.); and, finally, he is the "interpreter" of Yahveh ("Isa." xliii. 27), and as such naturally the mediator between God and his people (Jer. xiv. 11 sq., Zech. xiii. 5 sq.).

The utterances of the Hebrew prophets were delivered by themselves and received by their hearers as oracles and words of God. They are introduced with the standing *formulae*, "thus saith Yahveh," "Yahveh saith unto me," "the word of Yahveh," "the word which the prophet beheld," or "oracle of Yahveh." In the utterances themselves the prophet's own personality at times almost disappears, and the God in whose name he speaks is alone

\* The *πρὸ* in *προφήτης* does not originally refer to time, as if the prophet were primarily a predictor of coming events, but indicates the publicity and clearness of the utterance. Comp. *pronunciare, proclamare*. See Ewald, *Lehre der Bibel*, &c. I., p. 96.

heard. Generally it is Yahveh only who is heard speaking directly either to the prophet or to the prophet's hearers, though the Hebrew, unlike the Greek, prophet, for instance, never loses his own self-consciousness, and often stoops to the lower level of personal colloquy with his audience (*e.g.*, Isa. vii. 10, 25; viii. 9, 22). The prophet speaks as sent by his God, and under the irresistible compulsion of His *hand upon him* (Isa. viii. 11; Ezek. iii. 14). When Yahveh speaks, he can but prophecy (Amos iii. 8); and he stands in such close relation to his God that he knows "He will do nothing without revealing His secret to him" (Amos iii. 7). Accordingly, there is no greater sin than that a man should be a prophet after his own heart, running without being sent, and speaking his own words instead of those of his God (Jer. xiv. 14; xxiii. 16; Ezek. xiii. 2 sq.). To the extent to which the people were faithful and obedient to Yahveh, they listened with reverence to His messengers the prophets. As a fact the word of Samuel, Elisha, Isaiah, and other prophets "plucked up and pulled down, ruined and destroyed, built up and planted nations and kingdoms" (Jer. i. 10). Prophets of this magnitude ought to have been regarded as the inviolable representatives of Yahveh (Deut. xviii. 15, sq.; Jer. xxvi. 1—19), but frequently they met with perilous opposition and persecution in the discharge of their mission (Jer. ii. 30). It was then they displayed that fearless heroism which has made them the great prototypes of dauntless faithfulness in the cause of truth and righteousness.\* They then, in their best moments, represent the simple majesty and spiritual power of divine truth as divested of all adventitious aids and influences. The great prophets with whom we are concerned were for the most part unconnected with powerful guilds, though some of them may have received their education in them. Amos was not even a prophet by profession, but a humble shepherd from the bare mountain of Tekoa, who comes forward but once in his life, and in a distant

\* Amos vii. 10—17; Isa. vii. 10—25; Jer. i. 7, 8; xxvi.; Ezek. ii. 3—8; iii. 1—11.

land, with his prophetic message (vii. 14, 15). Though Hosea's messages had to be delivered during a series of years, he was probably as little as Amos connected with any prophetic society or party, and was compelled almost as a solitary man to lift up his warning voice against all the leaders of his people.\* During the first part of his prophetic life Isaiah had likewise to contend almost alone against his king, the ruling party, false prophets and priests, and the nation led by them. It was only gradually that he gathered around him a circle of sympathetic disciples and helpful friends, and it was only after more than thirty years of dangerous and apparently fruitless testimony that his prophetic word became a recognised power in Jerusalem. This almost solitary protestation, with its heroic grandeur and its stern perils, is a characteristic feature of the work of nearly all our prophets. Micah (iii. 7, 8; vii. 1, 2); Jeremiah (ix. 1, 2; xii. 10, 17; xv. 15—18; xx. 7—10, &c.); Ezekiel (ii. 3—7; iii. 7—11, 24—27), no less than Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, are occasionally almost ready to complain, with Elijah of earlier times, that they alone are left to bear witness for Yahveh. As the few and often solitary witnesses for divine truth, they can use no other instrument for enforcing it than the simple word by which it is conveyed. But occasionally they appeal to miracles and signs in attestation of their authority, and often they employ expressive symbols to set it forth more tellingly before the eyes of men.† The earliest prophets, whose names and deeds are preserved in the Old Testament, left no writings behind them, and the greatest of those from whom we have written oracles, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, made use of the pen only as a subsidiary means of giving permanent influence to their words. The greatest prophets, that is, were in the first instance speakers, and only secondarily writers. They come forward publicly to deliver in fiery harangues the messages which Yahveh

\* See Smith's *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 154—159.

† Hos. i.—iii.; Isa. vii. 11—16; xx. 1, 2 : xxxvii. 30; Amos vii. 16, 17; Jer. xix.

has committed to them. Like Jesus and his Apostles in later days, they appear frequently near the Temple amidst the assembled populace (Jer. vii. 2; xix. 14; xxvi. 2) in public squares and market-gates (Amos v. 10; Isa. xxix. 21); or they suddenly present themselves at unexpected places (Isa. vii. 3), and in the palaces of kings and magnates (Isa. xxii. 15). It was only after the public life of the nation had undergone great changes and free public speech was impossible, or in the entirely different circumstances of the Exile, that the prophets resorted in the first instance to the use of the pen. Moreover, this late change from spoken to written, from oral to literary prophecy, was itself one of the features of its declining days. We have, however, every reason to suppose that the written reproductions of the spoken orations are very far from being anything like verbatim reports. While they most likely preserve the substance of what had been spoken in public, they evidently not only greatly curtail the speeches, but also recast them after a more literary fashion. As in the case of some of Isaiah's prophetic utterances (viii. 16), the reproduction of them in writing was sometimes the work of sympathetic disciples and friends rather than of the prophet himself (Jer. xxxvi.). Nor can we suppose that this reproduction gave by any means always the substance of each oracle in the order in which it was uttered. We find that some of Isaiah's published prophecies contain in a short compass the substance of the teaching of several years.\* Compare the instructive narrative in Jer. xxxvi.

Having taken this brief general glance at the characteristic features and public work of the Hebrew prophets, we must now select a few of the most important points in the general description for closer inspection. Many points which would have to be treated in anything like a complete review of the subject, must be passed over in this short paper without notice. We can touch upon those questions only a correct understanding of which is indispensable for

\* See Smith's *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 235 sq., and particularly Ewald's chapter on *The Prophets as Writers*, Vol. I., pp. 59 sq.

even a partial appreciation of the character, the work, and the writings of those great heroes of antiquity. We may most conveniently begin with a short account of the great ideas which made them what they were and formed the basis of their work and influence.

The prophets of the ninth and following centuries with whom we have here to do, inherited from the past a great religion and a great history. They were not the founders of the religion of Yahveh, but its heirs and preachers; they were not simply men of the present and the future, but sons of a marvellous and glorious national history. In Yahvism they lived and moved and had their being, and particularly the memory of the great deliverance from Egypt and of the glorious days of the undivided Davidic kingdom moulded all their thought and aspiration. Moreover, the earliest of them had been preceded by others whose words they, above all men, regarded as the messages of Yahveh (Hos. xii. 10, 11; Amos ii. 12, iii. 7, 8).<sup>\*</sup> In the religion of Yahveh they received a number of fundamental ideas, and from these ideas they were compelled to draw great prophetic inferences, which again demanded realisation in actual history. We shall do well in studying the prophets to keep these three constituent elements of their thought apart.

The fundamental ideas of Yahvism, when stated generally, without reference to minor modification and clearer or less distinct presentations of them, were substantially, that Yahveh is the almighty God of righteousness, mercy, faithfulness, and holiness; † that He is the one true God, the Creator and the Lord of the world and all mankind; ‡ that Israel is His chosen nation, with whom He has entered into a mutual covenant, with obligations on Israel's part of faithful allegiance to Him.§ These ideas constitute the religious faith, the spiritual life, and the animating soul of the

<sup>\*</sup> See Ewald, *Prophets of the Old Testament*. I. pp. 85 sq.

† Amos ix. 1—6, Hos. ii. 14—23, Mic. vii. 14—20, Isa. vi. 1—4.

‡ Amos iv. 13, Isa. vi. 3, ii. 2—4, xix.

§ Amos iii. 2, Hos. vi. 7, viii. 1, xi., Jer. xxxi. 11 sq.

great prophets of Israel. They are the underlying principles of all their further thought, the deepest sources of all their highest hopes and profoundest fears, and the strength and stay of their heroic lives. For as a religious faith, firmly held, passionately loved, and incorporated into their spiritual being, these principles involved consequences which followed from them with the certainty of divine truth. The very idea of such a God as Yahveh involves the necessity of His sole and exclusive worship, and of a worship suited to His moral nature (Amos v. 21—27). As the God of love and righteousness, He must be the enemy of cruelty and wrong throughout the earth (Hab. i. 12—17), and as the covenant God of Israel He must be doubly hostile to Israel's unfaithfulness, injustice, and sensuality (Amos iii., Jer. xxv. 29). Nor is it possible that His authority and rule in the earth should for ever be resisted and defied as is actually the case at present (Isa. ii. 10—22, v. 16; Hab. i. 12, 13). Israel, His chosen nation, must love and serve Him perfectly, and He must be known and honoured throughout the earth (Mic. iv.). To believe less would be to doubt and dishonour Him. Nor is it conceivable that there should be a final and permanent separation between righteousness and prosperity, between the rule of justice and the blessings of peace, between the true worship and service of Yahveh and the rewards of kindly skies, fruitful fields, prosperous cities, and happy youth and hale and honoured age (Isa. xi., xxxii., lxxv. 17—25). Nor to many can it be conceivable that the God of Israel and of David should ever abandon His beloved city of Zion, and this must be especially difficult of belief in the case of those who remember how marvellously it was delivered from Sennacherib (Isa. iv., xxxvii. 22—35). Once more, if such certain inferences had of necessity to be drawn by the prophets from the fundamental principles of their religious faith, the very intensity and realism of their belief compelled them further to look for and expect an actual, and indeed speedy, realisation of its demands and ideals. Of all faiths in the world that of the Hebrew prophets is furthest from a patient and idle poetic



idealism. Israel's religion is a theocracy; its kingdom of God is present and on the earth; its day of judgment may be to-morrow, and its future life is this side the grave. Its prophets therefore can do no other than look out for the signs of Yahveh's advancing work in Israel and the earth. They must hear and declare by what means and in what way He will realise His purposes. He would cease to be Yahveh did He suffer His work to rest, and He would be unfaithful to His whole relation to Israel if He did not "reveal His secret to His servants the prophets." However, while Yahveh's nature and purposes remain unchangeable, the methods by which He accomplishes His designs may naturally vary with the changed attitude and necessities of men. Consequently, while the general inferences of the prophets' utterances from the fundamental principles of their religion scarcely vary at all, their announcements with regard to the means by which Yahveh is about to realise His necessary purposes must be to a considerable extent conditional and alternative. Thus a prophet may feel the absolute necessity of a day of judgment with its purifying fires as the condition of the return of Israel to Yahveh, and may proclaim it as impending. Yet by the speedy repentance of the people it may be averted (Book of Jonah); or though it come, the people may prove too obdurate to profit by it. Again, at one time it may be expected that the restoration and salvation of Israel, and through it the conversion of the nation, will be effected by a revival of the power of the Davidic royal house (Isaiah, Micah, Amos, &c.), while, at another, circumstances may have so changed that this means of realising an indestructible hope will appear impossible (Isa. xl.—lxvi.). In one age even a heathen king like Cyrus (Isa. xlv.) may be the prophetic hope, the agent of Yahveh's great deliverance, or His Messiah; and in another the return of a great prophet like Moses (Deut. xviii. 15—19), or again, of Elijah himself (Mal. iii.), may seem the best means of effecting a salvation which must surely come.\* Or, again,

\* See Ewald's chapter on the History of the Messianic hope, *History of Israel*, Vol. VI., pp. 103 sq.

one prophet connects the restoration of Israel with the overthrow of the Hebrew state by the Assyrians, and another with a second exposure to the perils and hardships of the desert (Amos and Hosea). It lay therefore in the very nature of the case that the prophet's views of the means to be used by Yahveh in the accomplishment of His unfailing purposes could not have the certainty and fixity which attached to either their religious faith or the necessary inferences which they drew from it. Still less could the prophets have that certainty with regard to times and seasons which a greater than they, we know, declared to be placed in the Father's own authority (Acts i. 7). There was, indeed, strong temptation to fix the periods for judgment and salvation, and but few of the prophets had the wisdom and patience which enabled Christ completely to overcome it; and we shall now have to see that it was in this respect especially that they showed themselves to be fallible and erring men.

This brings us to the next point which requires special consideration in even the briefest account of the work of the Hebrew prophets—namely, to their *predictions*.

It is man's high prerogative to "see before and after," and the object he has in view in studying the past is to read the future. And above all the believer in an eternal kingdom of righteousness and true blessedness must look beyond the past and the present, and expect and proclaim the advancing work of his God. As great men, and still more as great lovers and preachers of Yahveh's rule in the earth, the Hebrew prophets were necessarily forecasters and foretellers of the future. Indeed, in proportion to the intensity, the enthusiasm, and the realism of their faith in Yahveh and His work, prediction could not fail to occupy a prominent and a large place in their thought, discourses and writings. Accordingly, we find the remains of their orations and books preserved in the Old Testament are very largely made up of predictive utterances—threats of judgment, promises of a better time. And though the idea of the *prophet* is by no means primarily, and still less solely,

that of a foreteller of future events, at least one of the names by which the Hebrew prophets are designated in the Old Testament, gives prominence to this feature of their work as particularly characteristic of it. This is the name *watchman*; to which perhaps *seer* (that is, seer of visions of the future) may be added. The expression of Amos, "Surely, Yahveh doeth nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets" (iii. 7), represents a relationship between the prophets and the Judge and Hope of Israel which involved particularly the communication to them of higher light with regard to the future. At the same time the work of the prophets as witnesses for Yahveh and preachers of righteousness was by no means primarily that of anticipating the morrow. They had above all things to influence the living present. Consequently not a few of their discourses are denunciations of the prevailing vices of the time and exhortations to amendment, or descriptions of Yahveh's greatness and his righteous acts in the past, and not predictions.

If we examine more closely the nature of this part of the prophet's work as represented in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, we find it marked by two characteristics which distinguish it from the magical divination of the heathen. In the first place the predictions of these prophets are concerned solely with the realisation of the fundamental ideas of Yahvism, and in the second place the form in which they were conceived and are delivered is that of concrete, national, local, and temporal pictures of a general scope within those limits. It was not their function to forecast the issue of any merely worldly enterprise. Such things were beneath their notice as the servants of Yahveh, as well as beyond their ken as men. They left them to the guardians of priestly oracles (Judges xviii. i—6), or to the magicians (Lev. xix. 26, 31; xx. 6). Take, for instance, the prophecies of Amos as illustrating the first of these points. The little book consists of three parts, and the one fundamental prophetic thought which pervades them all and compels the shepherd of the bare hills of Tekoa to lift

up his threatening voice is, that Yahveh the universal and righteous Ruler is about to punish the sins of Israel, Juda and the surrounding nations by the invading armies of Assyria. In the first part (i. 2—vi. 14) the thunder of Yahveh's judgment is heard in the first chapters (i. ii.) against Damascus, against the Philistines, against Tyre, against Edom, against Ammon, against Moab, and against Israel, on account of the sins of those nations—sins which no believer in the fundamental thought of the book could regard as other than appeals to Heaven for vengeance. The sins denounced are flagrant and crying national and social crimes, which the great righteous Ruler of the nations could not suffer to go unpunished. The occasion of the threatened approaching judgment was of a publicity and vast historical importance such as might well call for Yahveh's speedy interference. Indeed, if He were to suffer such infamous crimes to go unpunished, His rule and glory would be compromised, and the fundamental postulate of His religion would be shaken. In the next chapters (iii. iv.) of this part we have a specific establishment of the accusations made against Israel in particular—of its unrighteousness, its luxuriousness, and idolatry, and its impenitence, ending in a final call to the nation to meet its God in judgment. It is again the same vast, general, moral and religious subject-matter—a nation's crimes and the righteous Creator's righteous and awful judgments, or the realisation of Yahvism in the great world of human affairs and national life. In the next two chapters (v. vi.) we find the prophet simply varying the one sublime, awful, and simple theme of the former ones, lifting up a lamentation over Israel's fall, reiterating the catalogue of its sins, describing in stronger colours the terrors of its approaching judgment, and the hopelessness of escape from them. The second part of the book (vii. 1—ix. 6) intensifies and deepens the terrible interest of the prophet's announcement of coming judgment on Israel particularly. A series of visions—characteristic forms of prophetic experience and utterance—show that Yahveh's judgment is at last inevit-

able and no more to be averted. A chapter from the prophet's personal history (vii. 10—17), in which we find him uttering a prediction against the priest Amaziah, creates an effective episode in the midst of the terrible proclamation of coming doom. But the prediction itself is really not a new one. It is only the application of the general threat of the approaching invasion of the country by the Assyrians to the faithless and ungodly priest in particular, for encouraging the king and the magnates in their sins, and resisting the word and will of Yahveh. The general judgment Amos proclaims is, "Israel must be invaded and punished for its sins by the Assyrians," and when the priest of Bethel bids the prophet in insulting terms to flee to his own land, Amos with direct and telling force replies, "Yahveh's threat remains, and thou wilt personally fall under it." The final part of the book (the few verses, ix. 7—15) reiterates the burden of Amos, but at the same time it adds the hope which necessarily relieves the gloom and darkness of all prophetic discourses. If Israel must be punished for its sins because Yahveh is just, it must also be redeemed, or at all events a remnant of it, because Yahveh is merciful and holy. The fallen tent of David will after the judgment be set up again, and the prosperous days of old under the great king of idealised memory will once more return for Israel. With regard to the form of this and similar predictions we shall have to say a word immediately; but it is obvious that the contents of it are only the other side of the one general postulate of the prophecy of the book—the realisation of the reign of Yahveh in His righteousness. In the same way an examination of the other prophetic writings shows that that portion of the prophets' preaching which referred to the future was occupied with the one great idea which underlies and sustains their entire thought and work—the realisation of Yahveh's purpose with Israel, in other words, the revelation of righteousness, the coming of the kingdom of God. We do not find the prophets anywhere giving auguries with regard to special or general events which form no necessary

element in their purely ethical conception of God's work and reign. It is the moral world only, with its laws, inspirations, postulates, and eternal necessities with which their expectations, threats and promises are concerned. When they are directed specially to a particular person, or place, as for instance, the priest Amaziah, the minister Shebna, the fortress Tyre, or the city of Zion, the special application finds its justification and necessity in the representative or decisive position which the man or the place occupies in the development of the eternal moral purpose and work of Yahveh. The special predictions regarding them are called for by the religious principles and the moral instincts of the zealous servant of Yahveh. We shall soon see that this is not only the source of them and their justification, but also the measure of their predictive infallibility.

We must now briefly consider the form of the predictions. The soul and meaning of them is, as we have seen, as wide and general as the great ideas of Yahvism, but the form they assume in the prophet's mind and speech is intensely concrete, their body is national, local, temporal. The universal laws of righteousness, the demands and postulates of a wide-sweeping ideal, become in the prophet's intensely zealous and eager soul, under the influence of his powerfully realistic Hebrew imagination, living, breathing, tangible pictures of the Divine necessities of his heart and conscience. The revelation of righteousness which he expects shapes itself before his imagination as taking place close at hand amid existing circumstances and in the living present before his generation has passed away. His ideal world is in this respect unlike that of the poet, who dreams his dream and holds it true whether it be realised on the earth or in the skies, now or in the coming age. For the prophet God's kingdom is a present reality, to be revealed in Israel, in Moab, either in judgment against living enemies, or in salvation by the co-operation of living servants of God. As Ewald puts it,

The presentment or anticipation of the future advances at once to the general scope and ultimate issue. Before the prophet

who is justified in foreboding evil there arises forthwith the vision of destruction in the form of the final ruin ; yet the latter sometimes does not come to pass immediately, and only partially, although the essential truth of the threat, whether it be executed soon or later, remains so long as the sins which provoked it continue. In the same way, when the gaze of the prophet, eager from joyous hope or sacred longing, dwells on the consideration of the so-called Messianic age, the latter appears before him as coming soon, as coming with haste, and what he so clearly sees seems to him not to be far off. But the development of events shows how many hindrances still stand in the way of the longed-for and surmised Consummation, which again and again vanishes from the face of the present. \*

It is part of the same mental necessity which leads the prophets so generally to describe the future judgment or salvation under the forms of past judgments and past prosperity. The fires of Sodom, recollections of earthquakes, of plagues of locusts, and of hostile invasions, for instance, supply the realistic colouring for pictures of coming doom, while the great days of old when God led his people by the hand of Moses, or ruled over them by his chosen king David, furnish the outlines for the enchanting sketches of the approaching Messianic times. Examples illustrative of these peculiarities of the form of our prophets' predictions are abundant. Thus Amos expects the general judgment of Heaven to fall immediately, through the instrumentality of the Assyrians, upon Israel, Judah, and the neighbouring nations, and he expects as the immediate effect of it the restoration of the Davidic prosperity of Israel. The judgment is conceived by him under the form of the Assyrian invasion, and the consequent reformation and prosperity of the nation under that of the restoration of the power and unity which Israel possessed under David, together with the attendant blessings of prosperous cities and fruitful fields. The famous Messianic prediction of Isaiah (vii. 10—17, viii. 23—ix. 6) illustrates still more strikingly these peculiarities. The prophet foretells three vast successive phases of the revelation of

\* *Prophets*, Vol. I., p. 86.



Yahveh's judgments and salvation, which are, in his view, all crowded into the brief period of the youth and the manhood of the Messianic child which is immediately to be born. These successive phases are, first, the devastation of Damascus and Samaria, then leagued against Judah, by Assyria, which must take place before the young woman just then of marriageable age could bear the child, that is, within a year or so ; second, the great and terrible judgment of the invasion of the land, with its purifying effects, to take place during the youth of the marvellous child of Messianic hope ; and thirdly, the time of deliverance, the Messianic age, to follow with his full manhood and accession to the throne, with his great name, Wonderful Counseller, Hero-God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. It is really startling to see with what magnificent boldness, gigantic realism, and heaven-storming impatience the most spiritual and evangelistic of the prophets welds together his eternal religious faith and his national and temporal surroundings. But this particular instance simply illustrates forcibly the general prophetic habit, and only strikingly shows how essential it is to separate in the prophetic predictions the universal and essential truth from the limited and accidental form in which it was conceived and expressed.

This brings us to the question of the fulfilment of the prophets' predictions. It is obvious enough to every unprejudiced reader of the Hebrew prophets that there is a very large number of their predictions which were never fulfilled in their natural and literal sense. Israel was never driven a second time into the desert as Hosea foretold (ii. 14—20), the expectations of Amos and Isaiah of decisive moral and religious effects from the Assyrian invasion were never fulfilled, the faithful " remnant " was not separated from the general mass, the Messianic king did not come, and the world did not gather around Mount Zion as the city of Yahveh. Egypt and Assyria were never converted to Yahvism, as Isaiah anticipated when his lofty prophetic spirit rose to its purest and serenest height (xix). The city of Tyre was not so completely destroyed by the Assyrians in

the eighth century as Isaiah, and a contemporary of his, anticipated (Isa. xxiii. 1—14), neither did the impending destruction of it by Nebuchadnezzar, foretold by Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Isa. xlvii. 4, Ezek. xxvi. 11—21, xxvii. 26—36, xxviii. 1—19), strictly speaking, follow, as Ezekiel himself seems, indeed, to confess (xxix. 18). Jerusalem was not destroyed by the Assyrians as Micah anticipated (iii. 12), while, on the other hand it did not remain finally inviolate, as Micah's older contemporary Isaiah had expected (xxviii. 16). These instances are sufficient to show the fallibility of the prophets in predicting the future. We may further notice that there is the greatest diversity, almost amounting to discordance, in their expectations with regard to the instruments by which Yahveh will bring to pass the future Messianic glory, as was above indicated. It is obvious that their views in this respect could not have varied so much according to the necessities of different ages had not the precise form and the hope of one period been found unsuited to another. The great prophet of the Exile, for instance, could pass over unnoticed the Messianic hope of Isaiah only because the time presented to him Cyrus as the great deliverer rather than a scion of the house of David, and the author of the Book of Daniel was driven to expect a Messiah coming in the clouds of heaven, without doubt for the reason that the earlier expectation of a second David was no longer possible.\*

\* Professor Robertson Smith's remarks (pp. 336-7) may be quoted as excellently illustrating this point :

" If the vindicating of the Divine mission of the prophets of Israel must be sought in the precision of detail with which they related beforehand the course of coming events, the hopes which Isaiah continued to preach during the victorious advance of Sennacherib must be reckoned as vain imaginations. The great decision which shall call back the earth to the service of the true God is still an object of faith, and not an accomplished reality. The Assyrians passed away, and new powers rose upon the ruins of their greatness to repeat in other forms the battle for earthly empire against the Kingdom of God. As Babylonia and Persia, Greece and Rome, successively rose and fell, the sphere of the great movements of history continually enlarged, till at length a new world went forth from the dissolution of ancient society, the centre of human history was shifted to lands unknown to the Hebrews, and its fortunes were committed to nations still unborn

However, it will be seen that, after all, the element of error and fallibility in these predictions reaches no further than their outward form, and does not touch the essential and divine inner reality. After all, the judgments which the prophets foretold followed, though not all in the manner and at the time they had expected; things corresponding to their visions of a Messianic age came to pass, though it subsequently appeared that the blessings of Yahveh's reign could not be realised according to the imagery of a particular nation, or even of a particular race; and the religion of Yahveh won its triumphs and established itself in the midst of the earth, though neither Egyptian nor Assyrian hastened to worship in the Temple at Jerusalem, or in Temples of Yahveh in their own countries. In the case of all the nations of their time against whom the prophets proclaimed judgment the truth of Schiller's great sentence—*Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*—was sooner or later, in one form or another, strikingly exemplified. Sorely tried as the prophets' faith in the eternal law which Goethe embodies in his line *Alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden* was by the apparent contradiction it met with in the triumphs of such nations as the Assyrians, their faithful and believing

when Isaiah preached. Not only have Isaiah's predictions received no literal fulfilment, but it is impossible that the evolution of the Divine purpose can ever again be narrowed within the limits of the petty world of which Judah was the centre and Egypt and Assyria the extremes. Fanciful theorists who use the Old Testament as a book of curious mysteries, and profane its grandeur by adapting it to their idle visions at the sacrifice of every law of sound hermeneutics and sober historical judgment, may still dream of future political conjunctions which shall restore Palestine to the position of central importance which it once held as the meeting-place of the lands of ancient civilisation; but no sane thinker can seriously imagine for a moment that Tyre will again become the emporium of the world's commerce or Jerusalem the seat of universal sovereignty. The forms in which Isaiah enshrined his spiritual hopes are broken, and cannot be restored; they belong to an epoch of history that can never return, and the same line of argument which leads us reverently to admire the Divine wisdom that chose the mountains of Palestine as the cradle of true religion at a time when Palestine was, in a very real sense, the physical centre of those movements of history from which the modern world has grown, refutes the idea that the kingdom of the living God can again in any special sense be identified with the nation of the Jews and the land of Canaan."

proclamations of it were in the end abundantly justified, and the result showed that it was due to its light that they did not misread history. Though Isaiah's hope of seeing a purified remnant of Israel the heir of the promises and the agent of Yahveh's work in the earth was never fulfilled in the history of the Judean state, the eternal truth and fact underlying it—that the religion of Yahveh and the community which lives in harmony with it are alike imperishable—have been exemplified in the subsequent history of religion in such a way as to make us feel how divine a light the hope cast into the prophet's future. It is certainly not too much to say, that without the light of that hope the religion of Israel would have perished with Israel centuries before the dawn of our era, and that then Christianity would not have arisen on the earth. It was the form of the prophets' predictions only that was, like so many other highest human conceptions and utterances, the creation of local and temporal circumstances, and therefore so often fallible and erroneous. The underlying and sustaining idea and faith—the sacred light and conviction which shone and burned behind the form—were infallible and eternally true, and they were a divine and indispensable guidance through the dangers and difficulties of the present into the greater future and towards the destined goal of Israel's history.

The glance which we have now taken at the fundamental ideas of the Hebrew prophets and at the scope and nature of their predictions places us in a position which enables us to understand and appreciate that claim which they make, which is so characteristic of them, and which to men of recent times has appeared so staggering,—the claim to speak in the name of their God.

The mixed and complicated phenomenon which meets us in the oracular utterances of the Hebrew prophets is not, indeed, in its general nature singular. It is presented by all the higher and purer oracles of great religions. They all combine the three elements of universal and necessary moral and religious truth delivered as the direct and express utterances of a deity, and embodied in temporal, local and

often mistaken forms. The peculiarity of Hebrew oracles in this respect is that each of these elements appears in such wealth, strength and boldness that we get a combination that is almost staggering in its apparent incongruity. We are surprised that truths of such divine necessity and universality should be delivered as the restricted and direct utterance of the God of Israel, and we almost take offence that such a bright light should be enclosed within lamps of such local construction and such imperfect transparency. The word of divine and eternal truth, we are apt to think, should come to men as the light of inward and universal Reason, "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and above all, should be free of the errors of national and temporal limitations and personal impatience. In Hebrew history the time came when to the profounder religious spirits the characteristic formula of the prophets, "Thus saith the Lord" (Jer. xxiii. 31), grew obnoxious, and the most enlightened of the prophets themselves desired that in the future the order might wholly cease to exist (Zech. xiii. 3—6). And in our own time the humblest and devoutest religious spirits turn sadly, if not indignantly, from those who claim to have been in the counsel of Heaven and to speak in its name, while it is only those who cannot profit by the lessons of history and experience who heed fore-castings of the future which require more than faith in general principles and deductions from observed facts to authenticate them. Consequently we find in the complicated web of Hebrew oracles much that at first sight prejudices us against them, and almost inclines us to think that they really do not contain the everlasting and infallible word of the true God. Further consideration, however, ought to remove our difficulties, and even make us glad to find that divine truth came to the Hebrew prophets also under conditions resembling those which universally fix the mode of its first most forcible communication to man.

This further consideration brings us, in the first place, to the obvious fact that the main burden and chief contents of

the oracles of the Hebrew prophets are precisely those profound moral and religious convictions which are to good men divine truths, "categorical imperatives," the very bases and foundations of all their hopes and fears, dearer and more certain to them than anything they can see or know. These convictions are therefore in the truest sense the voice of God within the soul; and when men speak of the conscience as the divine monitor within their breasts, they only express, in another form, the great fact that between the divine and the human spirit there is a sacred relationship. But, in the second place, the universal law of religious development is from the concrete to the abstract, from the particular to the general, through the temporal to the eternal. As yet, there has never been a natural religion, or a universal religion, except in the imaginations of mistaken philosophers. Even the most purely spiritual religion—Christianity—entered the world under the conditions and limitations and errors of a particular country, age, and circle of ideas and aspirations. Christ himself, for instance, probably connected the Judgment of the world and the inauguration of the perfect Kingdom of God with the threatening ruin of the Judean nation, while the first apostles connected the coming of Christ's kingdom with his immediate advent from heaven in the clouds. We have therefore really no reason to be surprised that the Hebrew prophets experienced the necessity, imperative authority, and eternal validity of their moral and religious convictions as Yahveh's inspirations, commands, threats and promises. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive how they could come under the overpowering influence of moral and religious conviction as divine necessity in any other way. In like manner the forms which these convictions assumed when brought to bear upon the world around them and the conduct of men were necessarily determined by the mental characteristics and the national and temporal surroundings of the prophets. The revelations of Yahveh's righteousness which they expected they could do no other than imagine under the image pre-

sented by the state of the world and society with which they were acquainted. The sphere in which both Yahveh's judgments and His deliverances could be displayed was necessarily that lying within the horizon of their terrestrial and celestial vision and hope. They could not patiently await the punishments and rewards of another world, because none of the earlier prophets at all events knew the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in the proper sense. They naturally conceived of the inviolability of righteousness as evincing itself in national and social rather than in personal and mental history, inasmuch as Yahveh was to them pre-eminently the Lord of nations and the God of His people Israel. Even that impatient forecasting of the coming triumphs of righteousness which led them so frequently to antedate both judgments and deliverances, must be regarded as a concurrent necessity of the intensity of their conception of its divine supremacy. It is true that an exceptional prophet like Isaiah, or Habakkuk, learnt to live by his faith and to wait with some patience, and that the calmer spirits of New Testament times, in the full hope of immortality, were less eager to anticipate God's Kingdom. But even they were unable to conceive the possibility of an indefinite postponement of its approach, and it is difficult to understand how the earlier Hebrew prophets, with their views of God's way, and with the burning intensity of their conceptions of divine righteousness, should have been able to repress the eagerness of their prophetic vision. Moreover, in the third place, the peculiar prophetic mode of picturing and presenting the divine oracles is often distinctly figurative and symbolic, and not properly descriptive, in a literal sense, of the past, the present, or the future. The prophet is a man of "visions," who in the moment of inspiration and ecstasy sees what his God is about to do presented before him in sudden pictures of limited extent and exceedingly compressed and concentrated contents. Though this feature of prophetic conception and writing by no means by itself explains the obvious antedating and still less the undeniable non-fulfil-



ment of a large number of the predictions found in the Old Testament.

We are now in a position, in the last place, to perceive what is and what is not the real greatness and the undying glory of the Hebrew prophets as well as the imperishable value of their example and writings. Their peculiar excellence is plainly not to be found in any supposed illumination granted exclusively to them, of quite another kind than the moral and religious light enjoyed by other members of the Hebrew nation and also by moral and religious heathens, or in such a degree as to preserve them from common errors to which all other good men are liable. Still less does it consist, as was once thought, in a supernatural and infallible precognition of future events lying centuries beyond the prophet's own age. The one great light which the prophets lived and walked in was the religion of Yahveh, and this they inherited with their birth in Israel. All their thoughts, aspirations, feelings, resolves were quickened and illuminated by it. The inferences which they drew from its fundamental ideas and the applications they made of both to men and times, might involve some new and great advances, but, with minor exceptions, the prophets never claim to have been entrusted with new and unknown religious and moral truth,\* and as a fact do not utter such. The Book of Job presents new truths, but then it is not a prophetic but a poetical work, and its author does not come before the world with the authoritative utterance, "Thus saith the Lord," or "It shall come to pass in those days." The greatness and value of the prophets lie in the fact that they had so entered into the life and spirit of Yahvism as to become living representatives and preachers of its few great but simple truths. They remain therefore the immortal heralds and apostles of divine righteousness in its imperative claims, its invincible progress, its glorious ideals. They lived and moved as before Yahveh with a grand simplicity of faith and conduct,

\* See on this point the important remarks of Reuss, §§ 258-263, Maybaum, *Die Entwicklung des Israelitischen Prophetenthums* (Berlin, 1883) pp. 86-95.

such as only men of ancient, simpler, and stronger times could reach, and they embodied all their life and thought in words and books of a corresponding grandeur and force, such as no subsequent age could even poorly imitate. They lived at a period of religious history, too, when men could not fall under the weakening and misleading influence of an abuse of the great doctrine of personal religion and personal immortality. The Hebrew prophets were not much occupied with the smaller concerns of their own personal relation to God, and they were not acquainted with the later doctrine of a future life. Hence they were absorbed in the greater and more elevating affairs of Yahveh's work of righteousness in the earth, of the condition, duties, and prospects of His chosen people, of the conversion of the heathen nations to His eternal religion. They were likewise men who above all others lived, spoke, and wrote under the overpowering conviction of a Divine call and mission. Of all men whom the world has known and with whom later ages have been kept familiar, it is such prophets as Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, who appear as sublime representatives and types of absolute consecration to the cause of truth and righteousness. For the most part almost solitary heroes, they delivered their messages at the peril of their lives in the teeth of monarchs, aristocracies, priesthoods, prophetic schools, and ignorant, pampered, and infatuated mobs. They were men who had been called to their work by virtue of a baptism and anointing which had for ever won and ravished their hearts with glorious visions of truth and righteousness. They had been lifted into the seventh heaven of ideal splendour as enchanting as any that ever fired a poet's soul and changed and consecrated a good man's heart and life. And yet they were men whose lot was cast in times of terrible ungodliness and fiercely triumphant wrong; so that if ever souls in love with the ideal contended with black doubt and fear because the divine ideal and the devilish actual were divided by such a dizzy gulf, those souls were they. But nevertheless they remained faithful to their "consecration" and their "dream." So that for more than two thousand

years their lives and their words have fed the world's highest hope, checked its faint-hearted unbelief, condemned its false pursuits, its worldliness, its cruelties, its luxuriousness, and its false religion. It was from their pages that Jesus of Nazareth rose and began to preach "The kingdom of God is at hand." It was in communion with their profound humanity and tenderness that he learnt to say, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden." He was their descendant when he cried in Jerusalem, "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites." Through familiarity with their heroic history he doubtless also prepared himself to fulfil the highest sacrifice of the ideal "servant of God." We know he regarded his mission as simply the fulfilment of their teaching and the realisation of his idea of their Messianic hope, and it was precisely the ethical and social feature of their religion—its love of God shown in the love of men—which distinguished Christianity from ceremonial and legal Judaism—the same feature which constituted one of the great distinctions between the religion of the prophets and that of the priests and people of their time.

J. FREDERICK SMITH.

## RECENT DEFENCES OF THE MOSAIC COSMOGONY.

**T**HOSE who are commonly known as "Liberal Christians"—that is those who have delivered themselves from bondage to the letter of the Bible and appeal to the supreme authority of reason and conscience, but who yet retain their faith in the reality of Religion and cherish a great and loving reverence for the spirit of Christ—are living somewhat too contentedly in the happy Paradise of their own liberality. The battle, they believe, has been intellectually won and the defenders of ancient dogmas have been driven from the field by the united forces of Science and Scholarship.

They describe, with glowing hopefulness, the Spirit of the Age as working among all sorts and conditions of men, casting down the crumbling strongholds of Superstition and upbuilding a House of Prayer into which cultured and enlightened men may enter without dreading lest they should hear within their secret souls the prophet's terrible question, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Pleasantly and gratefully satisfied with the general progress of modern thought, many liberal-minded men are becoming impatient of any teaching which they are able to call "negative." They declare themselves "tired of negations"; and almost angrily resent any clear, exact, definite discussion of the nature of the Bible, as though it were in itself unnecessary, and, in its influence, a hindrance to the growth of a devout religious faith.

Without doubt when we have once cleared for ourselves, through the wilderness of our doubts, a highway for our

God, it is folly to permit our thoughts constantly to dwell upon what we do *not* believe. To pass through life crying aloud "I do not believe this," and "I do not believe that," is a waste of time. What we *do* believe, is our chief concern. The settler is obliged to cut down the great trees and extract their tenaciously clinging roots—he must drain the morasses and make ruthless war upon the weeds—but the aim of his toil is to win fruit from the soil, and build a house in which he may dwell with wife and child. The clearance however must be complete before this object can be achieved.

The whole question with respect to the advisability of what is termed "negative" teaching about the Bible, hinges upon this point—is it true or not that, for this English community, the work has been done?

Until the Bible is known to be a collection of books, differing in value and recording various stages in the religious history of the Jewish race, it is hopeless to expect that any form of rational Christianity can be firmly established. Until this kind of knowledge is generally diffused, theological arguments will remain what to so large an extent they are, mere battles of texts; metaphors will be received as articles of faith; phrases torn from their context will be regarded as "scripture proofs"; the "word of God" will be confounded with speculations which have so completely vanished from the minds of men as to be unintelligible except to the scholar; the teachings of Christ, instead of being "spirit" and "life," will be resolved into "the letter that killeth."

A certain number of university men; a select band of clergymen of the "Broad" School attached to the Established Church; a considerable proportion of the ministers and members of one small group of Free Christian or Unitarian Churches; a few cultivated laymen scattered among our great towns, who exchange their religious thoughts chiefly with each other, hold clear opinions as to the composite character of the Bible, and look for the foundations of religion into the soul itself.

But to the great mass of our English Church and Chapel going population, the Bible is substantially the book it was before the great modern critical works were published.

So little indeed has the rational study of the Bible as yet penetrated our religious organizations, that no Englishman has produced an educational biblical manual, containing the ripest results of modern Science and Scholarship. Parents who are Christians, but at the same time cannot shut their eyes to the mythical element in their sacred books, have to depend upon a few translations from Dutch and German authors, and have no native literature to assist them in the religious education of their children.

Nearly three millions of scholars are, on an average, in daily attendance throughout the year in the public elementary schools of England and Wales. Almost the whole of these three millions of children are taught, on the authority of the Bible, that the world was made in six days or periods; that the ground labours under a curse because of man's disobedience; that death is a curse; that all the high hills were covered with water after forty days of rain, two of every sort of fowl, cattle and creeping thing being preserved in one small ark; and that the existence of many languages is due to the anger of God at the proud attempt of His creatures to erect a tower whose top might reach to Heaven.

A book called *The Teacher's Handbook of the Bible*,\* by the Rev. Joseph Pulliblack, is largely used by one of the great School Boards of the country as a manual of so-called unsectarian Biblical instruction. In this book, the Teacher is directed to give the following lessons to his pupils. He is to teach them that in the Book of Genesis the history of creation "is divided into parts, each corresponding to the work of one day or one period of time;" but if geology be a science at all, it is absolutely certain

\* *The Teacher's Handbook of the Bible.* By JOSEPH PULLIBLACK, M.A. Curate of Walton-on-the-Hill, Liverpool; formerly Scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge. 2nd ed. revised. London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 1879.

that grass, herbs yielding seeds, and fruit trees were *not* made during one day or period; fish and fowl during another; and cattle and creeping things during another. The various species of plants and animals now existing were introduced during many epochs; new plants and animals characterising each successive period. The scholars are to be informed that when "living things, whether plants or animals," are spoken of, and it is said that they were made "after their kind," these three words are very important indeed, "for they mean that God not only made the first specimens single plants or single animals of each sort, but also that He gave them power to produce others like themselves. For example, a grain of wheat produces an ear of wheat, and each grain in the ear will produce wheat, and nothing else; a hen's egg produces a chicken, and not any other bird. The wheat and the hen are after their kind." Young minds, that is, are to be prejudiced against the method of creation revealed by the researches of Darwin—the method by which the multiplication of slight inherited peculiarities gradually leads to specific differences—and to learn betimes to caricature one of the greatest discoveries ever made by the intellect of man.

Death is to be represented as "part of the punishment" of sin. "The body, which had been made by God's power out of the dust to be an instrument to serve Him, having been used as an instrument to disobey Him, was to turn to dust again." In this nineteenth century, our children are to be kept in ignorance of the fact that death is the natural result of our very creation as men and women, with bodies of flesh and blood, and must therefore be reverently accepted as a beneficent ordainment of our Father in Heaven.

The Teacher is further solemnly to inform his pupils that "violence and wickedness produced the flood"—that God has promised that no such flood shall happen again; and that whenever we see a rainbow, we should be thankful "for the long, long years during which God has kept His promises to Noah." But what are the facts? Not only do



the physical details of the flood involve a series of stupendous miracles (the necessity for which does not enter into the imagination of the writer of the Book of Genesis), but it is known beyond a doubt that all the high hills were not covered with water at one and the same time, that floods are acting to-day precisely in the same manner and in obedience to the same laws as those which prevailed in the past, and that rainbows were in the sky ages upon ages before Noah lived.

Mr. Pulliblack's Handbook represents the most moderate form of Biblical teaching given to three millions of children, largely at the expense and with the authority of the English nation.

I venture to say that there are not fifty public elementary schools throughout the whole country, in which a master would not be liable to summary dismissal should he plainly describe the simplest facts known to modern science, in their relation to the Hebrew legends.

Our national system of education is a vast propagandist institution; and its professed "unsectarianism" is an empty name whenever fundamental questions such as those directly connected with the Bible are involved. The seed of a thousand superstitions is being freely sown—seed which will undoubtedly bear fruit "after its kind" in days to come.

In how many Sunday-schools in this country are the discoveries of modern science, with respect to creation, really taught as divine revelations? In nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand Sunday-schools, the children of England are learning, as part of the "word of God," narratives which scientific men generally either reject or explain away so completely as to leave the language in which they are couched utterly meaningless.

The immense strength of the orthodox reaction provoked by the scepticism of the hour is overlooked by many liberal Christian thinkers. They rejoice in their own power of uniting reason and faith and naturally believe that the whole world is travelling in the direction they desire.

One tree of life is growing in England year by year, striking deeper roots and putting forth fresh branches—the tree of such life as there is in sacramental religion. Beneath the shadow of this tree, the intellectual atmosphere is close and the mind of man cannot breathe freely.

The genius of Sacramentalism is opposed to the exercise of independent judgment. It glorifies Authority; and submission to Authority is its virtue of virtues. It will accept nothing less than the unconditional surrender of mind and heart and conscience. Under its influence the study of the Bible and the performance of a religious service partake more or less of the nature of charms by which the favour of the Everlasting God may be secured. A Divinity hedges in the written word and the performed ceremony; and Criticism is dismissed from their sacred presences as a profane intruder.

The development of Sacramental Christianity can be checked by one force alone—the force of a direct appeal to the authority of the Spirit of God within the soul, as valid against any Church or Book by which it may be opposed. Should there be any timid shrinking from this appeal on the part of religious men, it is not difficult to foresee that England will have to pass through a period of bitter struggle between an aggressive Sacerdotalism and a fierce, angry, and determined Scepticism.

The increase of the agencies available for dogmatic teaching, and the revival of the Sacramental type of Christianity—so characteristic of recent years—have been accompanied by a new apologetic literature. The books issued from what is technically called “the religious press” have not, save in exceptional cases, many readers outside the circles to which they specially appeal; but their circulation within those circles is very large, and they are exercising a vast influence upon the great body of attendants at churches and chapels.

With respect even to the old questions at issue between Science and the Bible, a very general impression is being

created among the great mass of church and chapel frequenting people to whom I refer, that the critics have been answered; that the Book of Genesis has practically held its own against the assaults of Scientific enemies; and that the acceptance of the Mosaic cosmogony, "rightly understood," may still be made a condition of Christian discipleship.

One or two examples of this new apologetic literature on its scientific side are worth examining, not so much for their intrinsic merit, as on account of their extensive circulation and undoubted influence.

The fifth thousand of a work entitled *Moses and Geology, or the Harmony of the Bible with Science*,\* by S. Kinns, Ph.D., is announced as "now ready." It has been published with much flourish of trumpets; quotations from favourable reviews in important papers and magazines are given; and the names of fifteen Bishops appear in the list of subscribers.

The author undertakes to show that "the most recent scientific facts, as well as the strata of the earth, accord exactly *with the order given*" by Moses; and concludes that "if so, it must be admitted beyond all question that he received such accurate information directly from God Himself."

Applying the ordinary arithmetical rule for determining the possible permutations of any number of things or events, it is shown that in a lock of fifteen levers, the levers can be varied in their order 1,307,674,368,000 times.

Having thus proved to you that the number of changes that can be made in the order of fifteen things is more than a billion, if Moses has placed *fifteen* important creative events in their proper order without the possibility of traditional help, as most

\* *Moses and Geology, or the Harmony of the Bible with Science.* By SAMUEL KINNS, Ph.D.; Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society; Member of the Biblical Archaeological Society; Principal of the College, Highbury New Park. 3rd Ed. Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co.; London, Paris, and New York. 1882.

of them happened millions of years before man was created, it is indeed a strong proof of his inspiration, for group them as you may, and take off a further percentage for any scientific knowledge possessed by him, still the chances, I think, must be reckoned by *hundreds of millions* against his giving the order correctly without a special revelation from God." (P. 12.)

Dr. Kinns proceeds to give an "Order of fifteen creative events" which he imagines to be "taught by science" and to correspond with the Mosaic cosmogony.

It is almost impossible to treat Dr. Kinns' argument seriously. A more extraordinary version of the geological history of the Earth was never given; and the depth of meaning supposed to be contained in Lord Burleigh's famous nod is a trifle to the number of Scientific facts which are supposed to be involved in the few simple words attributed to Moses.

It is perfectly hopeless to attempt to reconcile the collection of geological facts contained in the body of the book itself with the summary of "Fifteen creative events."

A few salient examples of the method of argument will suffice. The creation of dry land is numbered as the fourth event. After the cooling of the earth great convulsions—it is said—took place which "heaved up the rocks and raised them above the universal sea, forming mountains, islands, and continents;" and it is maintained that this agrees with the words of Moses "and God said, Let the dry land appear." But Dr. Kinns' description does not in any way represent what is positively known of the method of formation of the dry land on which we live. The writer of Genesis is describing (it must be remembered) the making of the very *land on which man himself was placed by his Creator*. The land on which man lives was *not* formed as a whole by a series of primeval convulsions. It has been created by varied and marvellous processes extending over millions of years. It has been *built up* out of the wash of ancient rivers and the sands of vanished seas. Drifted sands and mud-charged estuaries have played their part. The busy coral-building inhabitants of the ocean have added

their share to the dry land. Chemical agencies have been active in solidifying the work of rivers, seas, and living creatures. Instead of being pushed up by mighty efforts *en masse*, our mountains themselves have been established by forces acting persistently and steadily over vast periods of time. Mountains, islands, and continents were *not* settled as we have them, at any one period of time. They represent the last results of a myriad complicated changes.

The verse "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind" is supposed by Dr. Kinns to represent the history of the creation of plants from the Cryptogams to the Phænogams with a low order of fruit, as far as the Carboniferous period! The higher order of fruit trees, he informs us, appeared "when God planted a garden later on."

That is, in Genesis *the creation of the plants now upon earth is not described*, except so far as the higher order of fruit trees is concerned. What Moses does, according to Dr. Kinns, is this: he describes the formation of plants belonging to the Carboniferous and preceding epochs, very few if any species of which now exist or have been even seen by man until a geological collection was made. In the opinion of Dr. Kinns Moses was inspired to give an account of the creation of our museum specimens, and *not* of the mass of plants which were actually before men's eyes, the fruit trees only being excepted!

Plants are represented in Genesis as having been created before fish, birds, cattle, and creeping things. Dr. Kinns' argument, therefore, demands that there should have been no marine creatures in existence *before* the Carboniferous epoch—a point on which the geological facts are right in the teeth of his theory. He is, however, quite equal to the emergency. He boldly interprets the words "Let the waters bring forth abundantly" as meaning "After the Carboniferous period *many fresh* species of marine animals appeared, and the sea swarmed with life."

Any allusion to the first creation of marine animals—the

very thing of which Genesis professes to give an account—is thus quietly swept aside.

Dr. Kinns' further illustrations of the harmony between "Science" and "Moses" are equally remarkable, and may be quoted as curiosities of Biblical Criticism:—

X.—SCIENCE: In the New Red Sandstone [footprints of birds are found for the first time.

MOSES: "*And fowl that may fly above the earth.*"

XI.—SCIENCE: In the succeeding strata of the Lias monster Saurians, such as the Ichthyosaurus and Plesiosaurus, are found.

MOSES: "*And God created great whales*" (should have been translated sea monsters).

XII.—SCIENCE: Enormous beasts such as the Megalosaurus, Iguanodon, and Dinotherium, preceded the advent of cattle.

MOSES: "*And God made the beast of the earth after his kind.*"

SCIENCE: Cattle, such as oxen and deer, appeared before man; some of them in the Post Pliocene period.

MOSES: "*And cattle after their kind.*" (P. 15.)

Comment upon this extraordinary passage is almost superfluous. Just as Moses was practically credited by Dr. Kinns with a knowledge of a fossil flora, he is made to refer to the creation of fossil birds and fossil saurians; and to omit any account of the coming into the world of the birds and saurians that co-exist with man. Between the clauses of sentences perfectly complete in themselves, enormous periods of time are interposed in an entirely arbitrary way. In the simple enumeration of the different classes of living things as they were known to the writer—fowl, great whales (sea monsters), cattle—is imagined to be hidden a scientific knowledge of the ordered succession of forms of life. Dr. Kinns describes after the Carboniferous period, a period of "many fresh species of marine animals,"—followed in succession by a New Red Sandstone period of birds—a Lias period of Saurians—a period of "enormous beasts"—a period of cattle; and imagines that this is the very

history a God of truth would give of the order of His creative work.

But nothing can be vaguer and cruder than this account of the succession of life upon earth. Fresh species of marine animals have constantly been created during every period; the occurrence of footprints of birds in the New Red Sandstone is extremely doubtful;\* it is certain that true reptiles are found in the Carboniferous epoch itself; while intermediate forms of birds and mammalia occur with reptilian peculiarities.

Very great stress is laid, in the few defences of the Mosaic cosmogony written by Scientific men, on the supposed agreement between the geological order of animal life and that sketched by Moses. Dr. Dawson, for example, a scientific man of the highest rank, finds in the Scriptura record "great coincidences" with the discoveries of palæontology.†

From both records we learn that various ranks or gradations existed from the first introduction of animals; but that on the earlier stages only certain of the lower forms of animals were present; that these soon attained their highest point, and then gradually, on each succeeding platform, the variety of nature in its higher—the vertebrate—form increased, and the upper margin of animal life attained a more and more elevated point, culminating at length in man; while certain of the older forms were dropped as no longer required. (P. 346).

I submit that no one ignorant of geology could by any possibility learn that there has been a progressive development from lower to higher forms of life, from the single statement that on the fifth day fish and birds were created,

\* It has been supposed that evidence of the existence of Triassic birds is furnished by the three-toed footprints just referred to. But probably these are mostly, if not entirely, the tracks of dinosaurs, the absence of two pairs of prints in each track being accounted for by the birdlike habit of the animals in the use of their hind feet in walking.—Geikie's *Text Book of Geology*, p. 763.

† *The Origin of the World according to Revelation and Science*. By J. W. Dawson, LL.D. Second Ed. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1880.



while on the sixth day beasts of the earth followed. Dr. Dawson puts his argument in the following tabular form :—

BIBLICAL ÆONS.	PERIODS DEDUCED FROM SCIENTIFIC CONSIDERATIONS.
Fifth day. — Invertebrates and fishes, and afterwards great reptiles and birds, created.	Palæozoic period—Reign of Invertebrates and Fishes.
Sixth day.—Introduction of mammals—creation of man and Edenic group of animals.	Mesozoic period—Reign of Reptiles.
	Tertiary period—Reign of mammals.
	Post Tertiary—Existing mammals and man.

This apparent parallelism is secured by quietly dropping out of the account in Genesis of everything which does not harmonise with science. Instead, however, of summing up "Biblical Æons" in this indefinite way, let us take the order of creation as it actually stands in Genesis.

Third Day—Creation of grass, herbs, fruit trees.

Fifth Day—Creation of fish and birds.

Sixth Day—Creation of all land animals.

It will be sufficient to place against this account the following established facts—

(1.) All the plants upon earth were *not* created before the fish and birds; all the fish in the sea and all the birds in the air were *not* created before all the living creatures upon earth.

New species of plants, fish, birds, and mammals have been created epoch after epoch.

(2.) The plants, fish, birds, and mammals, in the same stage of development, have not been created at one and the same time.

Dr. Geikie, in his admirable Text-Book of Geology, points out that while the same general succession of organic types has been observed over a large part of the world, though, of course, with important modifications in various countries, it does not follow that the groups of strata

characterised by a resemblance of organic remains were chronologically contemporaneous.

The grand march of life in its progress from lower to higher forms, has unquestionably been broadly alike in all quarters of the globe. But nothing seems more certain than that its rate of advance has not everywhere been the same. *It has moved unequally over the same region.* A certain stage of progress may have been reached in one quarter of the globe thousands of years before it was reached in another; though the same general succession of organic types might be found in each region. At the present day, for example, the higher fauna of Australia is more nearly akin to that which flourished in Europe far back in mesozoic time than to the living fauna of any other region of the globe. There seems also to be now scientific evidence to warrant the assertion that the progress of terrestrial vegetation has at some geological periods, and in some regions, been in advance of that of the marine fauna. (P. 619.)

Not only is the defender of the Mosaic cosmogony driven from the plea that the order of creation is literally correct; but when he takes refuge in the vague theory that the creation of general types is described, he is met by the fact *the creation of plants and animals of the same organic types has not taken place at the same period, all the world over.*

*The Pulpit Commentary*\* on Genesis has reached a 4th edition; and, edited as it is by careful and responsible scholars, it doubtless supplies the science for a thousand pulpits.

In the general introduction, Canon Farrar with great plainness of speech reminds the clergy that "in many thousands of instances in age after age" they have "conclusively proved their entire incompetence to decide upon points of science;" and he advises them to avoid controversies as to the relations between science and religion, and

\* *The Pulpit Commentary*. Edited by the Rev. Canon H. D. M. SPENCE, M.A., Vicar and Rural Dean of St. Pancras, and Examining Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol; and by the Rev. JOSEPH S. EXELL, editor of the "Homiletic Quarterly." *Genesis*. 4th ed. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co. 1881.

to rest on the certainty that "though exegesis may be erroneous, the scientific *results* which have rewarded centuries of labour have not in a single instance clashed with any truth of religion. How can they clash, seeing that truth must be truth, and that God reveals himself in the facts of nature no less surely than he revealed himself in his Word?"

Why, however, are ministers of Religion to be silent respecting the revelation of God in Nature? They believe in God as the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, why are they to decline to unfold the glory of His works? The Psalmist of Israel—the Prophets—Christ himself—appeal to the marvel and the loveliness of Creation as a ground for adoring faith. Why are Christian ministers to utter no word of praise—to unfold no Law of the Lord's creative glory?

The plain meaning of Canon Farrar's advice is that the clergy had better not discuss the wonderful works of the God they serve—because they may get into trouble with the first chapters of the Book of Genesis! Their wisest plan therefore is—so practically runs this strange piece of counsel—to admit generally that these chapters are part of the Word of God, and say nothing as to what they mean or do not mean. Surely however the revelation of the Creator made in the very works of His Hand, cannot be neglected with honour by those who would teach His Will.

If the clergy are incompetent what has made them so? Canon Farrar's own words will guide to the answer:—*"They have been so repeatedly forced to modify their interpretation of Scripture in accordance with finally demonstrated and universally accepted truths."*

Why has this been the case? Because they have been afraid to look at facts lest a text in Genesis should be proved to be mistaken. The Book of Genesis has been their first care and the truth of Science a subordinate interest. The remedy is not to be found in abandoning a divine revelation by ignoring Science, but in escaping from mental bondage to an ancient cosmogony.

The Author of the "Exposition and Homiletics" in the *Pulpit Commentary* on the Book of Genesis does not follow the advice given by Canon Farrar in the Introduction, but enters upon an elaborate and daring attempt to maintain its Scientific accuracy.

"If the Mosaic cosmogony is true, it can only have been given by inspiration; and that it is true may be said to be with rapidly augmenting emphasis the verdict of Science."

Much use is made of the easy process of *reading into the text anything that is not contradicted by it*. It is almost taken for granted that whatever scientific fact is not denied, was present to the mind of Moses, and is virtually implied in the narrative. A considerable portion of the Commentary may therefore be dismissed as resting on absolute assumption. The Commentator, for instance, regards the Nebular Hypothesis of Laplace; the present form of the Earth as an oblate spheroid, such being the shape it must necessarily have assumed had its original condition been that of a liquid mass revolving round its own axis; and the fact that below a certain point of the earth's crust, the heat of the interior mass becomes greater in proportion to the depth below the surface; as furnishing "*direct corroborations*" of the verse "and the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The extraordinary capacity of this author for this extremely unscientific kind of exposition may be judged from the fact that he finds in Psalm civ. 7 ("At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away"), nothing less than a hint "at *electric agency* in connection with the elevation of the mountains and the sinking of the ocean beds."

In another part of the Commentary the same extraordinary course is taken as that which I have already criticised. The explanations given practically confine the Mosaic account to the creation of a fragmentary part of the fossil flora and fauna, entombed within the rocks. We are asked to believe—for example—that the writer of the

words "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind;" did not refer to the grass, the herbs, the fruits before his eyes, but to an abundant fossil flora (*which has not even yet been discovered*) in the lowest sedimentary strata.

I am in no way exaggerating the purport of the *Pulpit Commentary*. The graphites of the oldest known fossiliferous rocks are seriously referred to, as furnishing traces of "the third day's vegetation." No notice is taken of the creation of plants over and over again, in every epoch of the Earth's history—new genera and species being perpetually introduced.

We are further asked to believe that the writer of the words "And God created great whales and every living creature that moveth which the waters brought forth abundantly," was not thinking of the creatures with which he was acquainted but of fossil forms, which only within the last century have been brought within human ken—of "the trilobites and molluscs of the Cambrian and Silurian systems," and the "ganoid fishes of the Devonian." Not a suspicion seems to cross the mind of the commentator that if the Bible really contains revelations which no mortal reader could by any possibility whatever gather from its written words it becomes the most unreliable of all the Books that have ever been written. To-morrow another set of discoveries may compel the compliant commentator to alter yet again his interpretation of the text—and so on *ad infinitum*.

On one point however the commentator does feel that he is treading on dangerous ground. It might seem, he admits, to be the teaching of the inspired writer that the great sea monsters—the creeping things—the birds "were created simultaneously and so were synchronous in their appearance," whereas

The testimony of the rocks rather points to a series of creative acts in which successive species of living creatures were summoned into being, as the necessary conditions of existence were prepared for their reception, and indeed with emphasis

asserts that the order of creation was NOT as in verse 21, first the great sea monsters, then the creepers, and then the birds." (P. 26).

The commentator regards this as an elucidation and not a contradiction of the "Word of God." It indicates, however, the precise point at which the account of the method of Creation given by modern science diverges from ancient speculative cosmogonies.

In the Book of Genesis, Creation is represented as a series of definite acts—each one being complete in itself. The dry land is formed and set down in its place. Grass, seed-bearing herbs, and fruit-trees, together with the tribes of living creatures, are fashioned separately by distinct efforts of creative power. The fundamental principle of geology however is that creation is neither a sudden act nor a succession of isolated acts, but a continuous process, in which the earth as it is at any one moment or at any one epoch is a modification of the earth as it was at the moment or the epoch immediately preceding. Not an acre of soil, not a fragment of stone, not a heap of sand, not a rock mass, not a plain, valley, or mountain, not a river, lake, or sea, was created exactly as we see it. It has become what it is through an elaborate series of processes, and has a history of its own stretching through vast ages. Of every portion of the earth's crust, the geologist asks by what processes has it been formed? What has been its history? What are its relationships to all other portions of the earth's crust both as they now exist and as they have existed?

Physically no single atom of matter has ever occupied twice precisely the same position. The geologist deals with processes, histories, and relationships through which new results are perpetually being produced.

The life-history of the world, like the history of its rock masses and continental areas, has been a series of continuous and connected changes among all forms of plants and animals. No plant or animal any more than any rock was originally created just as we see it or placed at the

precise spot on which we find it. At every epoch fresh forms of life,—related to forms doomed to pass away and yet differing from them,—have crept into being, gradually but persistently, until the vegetation clothing the earth and the animals inhabiting it, have been completely changed again and yet again. Not only is it true that “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” but creation is a process that has always been going on, and is being continued in the nineteenth century of the Christian era as certainly as when the first ray of light appeared in the sky.

The Bishop of Edinburgh (Dr. Cotterill) in a recently published treatise entitled *Does Science Aid Faith in regard to Creation?*\* takes up entirely different ground from that occupied by the writers whose ambition it is to prove that Moses was supernaturally acquainted with the principles of modern geology.

Dr. Cotterill maintains that it is dangerous “to attempt to make the conclusions of science fit in with the language of Revelation in regard to creation.” He quotes a passage from an address delivered by the Bishop of Durham, on the occasion of the jubilee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in which the Church of Christ is directed to “understand and absorb” the truths of science and to learn by the lessons of the past to keep itself free from distrust and dismay.

Astronomy once menaced, or was thought to menace, Christianity. Long before we were born the menace had passed away. We found astronomy the sworn ally of religion. The heresy of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had become the orthodoxy of the nineteenth. When, some years ago, an eminent man of science, himself a firm believer, wrote a work throwing doubt on the plurality of worlds, it was received with a storm of adverse criticism, chiefly from Christian teachers, because he ventured to question a theory which three centuries earlier it would have

\* *Does Science Aid Faith in regard to Creation?* By the Right Rev. HENRY COTTERILL, D.D., F.R.S.E., Bishop of Edinburgh. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1883.



been a shocking heresy to maintain. Geology next entered the lists. We are old enough, many of us, to remember the anxiety and distrust with which its startling announcements were received. This scare, like the other, has passed away. We admire the providential design which through myriads of years prepared the earth by successive gradations of animal and vegetable life, for its ultimate destination as the abode of men. (P. 4.)

Dr. Cotterill perceives that other interpretations of this constant adaptation of the language of the Bible to the discovery of science may be given. The adversaries of orthodox Christianity may urge that it "*is a proof that the religion itself is changing its form as mankind becomes more enlightened,*" while some of its adherents may regard it as a sufficient reason for distrusting science itself.

Although it may be true that, as science has made its discoveries, theologians have contrived to adjust their belief to the new views which have been forced upon them much against their own will, and thus to satisfy themselves, though they have not satisfied the world in general; at all events, they have never effected such adjustment without a serious loss to Christianity itself, at least as accepted by them; the loss of a belief in Scripture as really inspired by God, and, therefore, perfectly and absolutely true according to that interpretation of it which an honest and impartial mind must accept. If it is a "nose of wax" to be twisted to one side and the other by a process of accommodation to suit new views of truth, or to be explained away to mean the very opposite of that which it seems to mean, what will be the result of such a process, but that Christianity itself, with all its supernatural dogmas, will ultimately disappear? (P. 5.)

The argument of this passage is clear and unanswerable. Regard for the Bible as an inspired authority must disappear if it be treated as "a nose of wax," and twisted to one side or the other according to the exigencies of the discoveries made by the intellect of man. A book that is made to say whatever the reader thinks it ought to say cannot be relied upon as "perfectly and absolutely true." In such a case the reader becomes the master of the Bible,

practically altering its meaning whenever scientific research demands a change; and the Bible no longer speaks for itself to the reader.

Following this line of reasoning, Dr. Cotterill does not attempt to make the Biblical history of Creation "*fit in with the scientific view*;" he still, however, regards it as "inspired," and believes that it cannot contradict such truth "as the enlightened reason of man can discover in nature."

Putting this position into plain words, does it not amount to this:—that what is scientifically incorrect may yet be revealed as the "perfect truth"?

As a scientific student, I may be permitted to say that the facts of nature cannot be harmonised with the Biblical narrative, but as a Christian I am bound to believe that the Biblical narrative is absolutely true.

Dr. Cotterill's treatise is an ingenious attempt to maintain the truth of these two contradictory propositions, and to enable "those that believe" to retain their faith in the book of Genesis as the unerring word of God, yet at the same time to accept scientific conclusions which cannot, by any ingenious "process of accommodation," be harmonised with it.

It is urged that "the purpose of Revelation" is *not* scientific, and that it is not intended to communicate such knowledge of natural things as man's own faculties can themselves acquire. This appeal to the supposed purpose of Revelation is completely answered by the plain fact that the book of Genesis actually *does* what we are told it was not intended to do.

As a matter of fact Genesis is full of statements, the truth or falsehood of which can and *must* be decided by scientific investigations.

A book which makes assertions that come within the range of scientific research—as Genesis does—cannot be protected from criticism by the plea that it was written for another purpose. Why were such subjects alluded to at all, if it was not intended to furnish accurate information about them?

Genesis asserts that the creation of plants and animals took place in a certain order of succession. The order given is either correct or incorrect; and Science is perfectly competent to decide the point.

Genesis describes a series of definite creative acts—one class of organisms being finished before another class was fashioned. Science is quite able to discover whether the Creator did or did not really act in quite another way, and achieve His purpose through wonderful processes of development.

Genesis gives an account of the spreading of the waters over the whole earth. The action of rain and denudation generally in its effects on the earth's crust are matters for purely scientific investigation.

Dr. Cotterill further urges that "the inspired history of the creation of heaven and earth could not (we may say with all reverence) have used the language of science, because *this language is not the truth*. If any one is disposed to demur to this, let him ask himself what science it is, the language of which is perfectly true, and expresses the whole truth as to nature and its phenomena." (P. 27.)

Because the whole truth cannot be expressed, it does not follow that language should be used suggestive of positive error. The language of Genesis, interpreted in its plain, natural sense, has been employed to oppose the greatest scientific discoveries which have been made from the first centuries of the Christian era until the present day. In a scientific sense, it has proved itself not merely inadequate, but misleading.

But why argue these questions so seriously as I have done in this review, many may be disposed to ask. On the death of Bishop Colenso, the ablest of Gazettes—the *Pall Mall*—assumed that all interest in the Biblical studies which made his name famous among heretics had died out, and belonged to a past generation. I can scarcely imagine a stranger misreading of the signs of times. Whatever may be the feeling prevalent among a few circles of culti-

vated men, spiritual forces are not played out in England and will largely shape its destiny.

The solution given to the problems connected with the Bible and its meaning, will decide the question whether England is, or is not, to become a nation of sceptics—a decision fraught with the mightiest political and social, as well as religious, issues.

At this moment the scepticism so rife among the great masses of our hardworking people has been largely caused by the untenable claims made on behalf of every book of the Bible. The "Freethought" publications that circulate among them in enormous numbers, are full of jokes and caricatures which would be without point or power, were it frankly admitted that the Bible contains the record of human errors and passions, as well as the revelation of an eternal righteousness and love.

The arguments of almost all the sceptics I have ever conversed with, among intelligent working men, have been connected with passages in the Bible to which objections have been taken as containing statements which are either opposed to the facts of nature, or unworthy of a God. The knowledge of science is rapidly spreading in every direction, and when the Mosaic cosmogony is generally known to be erroneous, the shadow of uncertainty will fall upon the religion which has been so unwisely identified with it.

The diffusion among the people at large of a knowledge of the fundamental facts concerning the composition of the Bible is the special and pressing duty incumbent upon religious men. The eternal instincts of the soul will then be permitted to assert their power, and a heavy burden, grievous to be borne, which now checks the free activity of the spiritual life, will be uplifted.

At the authoritative and resistless command of the hearts and consciences of men, a new temple will be upbuilt, in which science itself will humbly bow its head, and worship Him "who saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."

HENRY W. CROSSKEY.

## JOHN WILLIAM COLENZO.

All the (missionary) bishops are bound . . . not only to rule and instruct those of their diocese, furnishing them with all spiritual food, but also to defend them from all evils, afflictions, and oppressions.—*Las Casas*.

IN the last month of the year 1853 John William Colenso, the newly-consecrated Bishop of Natal, sailed from Plymouth (in company with the Bishop of Cape Town), to take a preliminary survey of his diocese (chiefly in *partibus infidelium*) and gain information to aid him in making arrangements and enlisting support for his future work.

This determination to see things for himself, and the energy with which it was carried out, are thoroughly characteristic of Bishop Colenso, and the delightful record of his "Ten Weeks in Natal,"—to say nothing of the often pathetic interest thrown back upon it by subsequent events—deserves on its own account to occupy a permanent place amongst popular books of travel.\*

A few particulars of Colenso's first impressions of the native races with whom he was to be thrown into such close relations can hardly fail to interest our readers.

At noon on January 30, 1854, Colenso "stepped out upon the jetty at Port Natal, a stranger among strangers," and in a few minutes was in the saddle on his way to Durban, with open eyes and ears, making observations and receiving advice. "We saw some very elegant butterflies on the way, and some far from elegant Kafirs, whose first appearance, in complete undress, was by no means prepossessing. . . . My two friends had very little confidence in the success of missionary operations among the

\* *Ten Weeks in Natal, &c.* By JOHN WILLIAM COLENZO, D.D., Lord Bishop of the Diocese. Cambridge, 1855.

Zulus. 'The missionaries are too familiar with them. You must never indulge a Kafir—never shake hands with him. He does not understand it, and will soon take liberties.' However, they both admitted that the advice and example of Mr. Shepstone was the very best to be followed."

With the energy that always characterised him, Colenso arranged at once to make a journey amongst the native chiefs, in company with this same Mr. Shepstone, and in a few days he was deep in experiment, inquiry, and observation as to the best methods of approaching the native mind with Christian teaching. His quick sympathies soon taught him that great mistakes had been committed in this matter, and, novice as he was and as yet unacquainted with the native dialects, he was able from the first to put his thoughts into a form which appealed to the religious feelings of the natives, and showed them that there was more in common between the white man and the black than they had ever known. His questions drew from them expressions of the higher aspects of their own beliefs, and indicated points of attachment for Christian teaching which were a surprise to men who had lived amongst them and been familiar with them for years.

The Bishop on his side soon felt his heart drawn towards his black brethren. He found it very hard to preserve the distant bearing that was prescribed by his friends. "With all my heart I would have grasped the great black hand, and given it a good brotherly shake. . . . I confess it went very much against the grain; but . . . I looked aside with a grand indifference as long as I could (which was not very long), and talked to Mr. G., instead of paying attention to the Kafir's presence."

In spite of this assumed stiffness, the Kafirs saw the character of the man at once. They have a way of inventing names for all the Europeans with whom they come into special relations. "Thus a tall, slight English lad received the name of *um Konto*, or 'javeline'; an English lady is very likely to be distinguished by the title of 'the great white elephant.' . . . Miss Barter once rejoiced in this

appellation; but it has latterly been exchanged by them for one more appropriate, namely, *No-musa*, 'mother of mercy.' Before Colenso had been three weeks in Natal, the natives, with a touching and prophetic instinct, had given him the name of "Sobantu," Father of the People.

Presently the Bishop got well beyond the pale of European civilization, but his happy way of addressing the natives (always through an interpreter as yet), secured their respectful attention. Their comments were sometimes very suggestive. They told him the progress of Christianity had been much hindered "by persons saying that the world will be burned up—perhaps very soon—and they will be destroyed. They are frightened, and would rather not hear about it, if that is the case." But they liked the Lord's Prayer—especially as expounded by Colenso. Then he told them whose prayer it was; how the Great God—Umkulunkulu [a significant native word, to which Kafir hearts instantly responded, which Colenso substituted for the unmeaning *u Tixo* of the missionaries]—sent his Son to become a man, and He lived among men, and loved them, and taught them about the Love of their Father in Heaven," to which they replied, "Their old women had stories something like this."

It is interesting to note that on this little tour amongst the chiefs Colenso met with Langalibelele, whom he so generously defended in later years, and was much pleased and impressed by him. The only unmitigated savage he came across was Pakade. This chief listened with marked attention to Colenso's exposition of the Lord's Prayer, and then remarked that it would be very proper for public use at his great festivals—but how did they make *gunpowder*?

These few glimpses must suffice. The book from which they are derived shows us Colenso full of strength and enterprise, with a warm heart and a clear head, with an elastic spirit of enjoyment, a simple and manly piety, boundless hope and boundless love.

No one could have anticipated Colenso's future career



from these beginnings ; but it is none the less true that they enable us distinctly to trace, already at work, the forces which were ultimately to shape that career. Especially we discern a fresh and ready sympathy with the native mind, a capacity for approaching things from the native's point of view, and realising his actual feelings, which will play havoc with the mass of conventional beliefs and traditions in which the Christianity of the Church of England is swathed. A man of unprejudiced and candid mind, with a sensitive touch for realities and sufficient power of sympathy to be able to change places in imagination with his pupil, cannot possibly submit his beliefs to a severer process of sifting than that which is involved in his beginning *de novo*, and imparting them to a receptive, but fresh and unconventionalized mind. Teaching confirms a hard and narrow soul in its intolerant isolation, cuts off all its stores from contact with reality, and gives them a cut-and-dried dogmatism that is inaccessible to any vivifying power, and becomes "furiously or stupidly fanatical" whenever disputed or assailed ; but it gives to such a mind as Colenso's an expansive force, which might, under other conditions, have lain dormant or undeveloped, teaches it to discriminate between the essential and the accidental, sets all the vital juices flowing, and fails not to emphasize anew the fact that God has revealed many things to babes and sucklings which he hides from the wise and prudent. And in this same quickness of sympathy and (at least potential) freedom from prejudice we may likewise find the root of that championship of native rights which so fully justified the title of "Sobantu," and which virtually placed the crown of martyrdom upon Colenso's brow.

It was not till May 20, 1855, that Colenso arrived for the second time at Natal and fairly settled to his work. He was about forty years of age, and as yet had little suspicion of the latent heresies that lay in his own bosom, or of the work he would have to do in defence of native rights.

It is true that his sermons show him to have been

keenly alive already to the evil influence of such "colonists" as the one of whom Wordsworth wrote

Deliberately and undeceived  
Those wild men's vices he received  
And gave them back his own,

but the larger questions of "Native Policy" do not seem to have engaged his attention. As concerning heresy, however, the bloodhounds of the *Record* were already on his track; but the heresy hunters complained that the scent was cold. In their laudable desire "to ascertain the religious sentiments of the new bishop," they found the materials for their inquiry "few and meagre." It was clear, at any rate, from the preface and dedication to a volume of nine "Village Sermons" which he had just published, that he was a fervent admirer of F. D. Maurice, and the *Record* found it "not a little ominous that a colonial bishop should publicly avow himself the disciple of such a teacher." This is only worth mentioning because of the rather amusing fact that the Bishop warmly resented the charge of sharing Maurice's "universal hope" for the wicked, and culled from his own village sermons a little bouquet of hope-excluding passages in refutation of it. He feels imperatively called upon to make some reply to the "accusations" of the *Record*, and to show that he will be justified when the time arrives in solemnly avowing himself "ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word." \*

With this cheerful confidence in his own orthodoxy, then, but with unabated warmth of admiration for Maurice, Colenso set off to Natal, and put his shoulder to the wheel of his work there.

What that work was we learn from himself, for, like Paul, he was driven by the ungenerous attacks of his theological opponents into an unwilling but manly and straightforward account of his almost superhuman toil. When he landed

\* See *A Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, &c.* By JOHN WILLIAM COLENZO, D.D., Bishop-Designate of Natal. London. 1853.

in Natal there were practically no books printed in the Zulu language, and none from which to learn it. "The whole work had to be done from the beginning, the language having to be learned from natives who could not speak a word of English, and written down, and analysed, with infinite, intense, labour." Colenso had no special gift for languages. His mastery of the Zulu tongue was the reward of stubborn work, of "sitting with [his] natives day after day, from early morn to sunset, till they as well as [himself] were fairly exhausted, . . . and when they were gone, still turning round again to [his] desk, to copy out the results of the day."

Seven years of such toil produced no fewer than eighteen works expressly designed for the use of missionary students and native scholars, including Zulu grammars, dictionary and reading books, and translations of a great part of the Prayer Book, the whole of the New Testament, and several books of the Old Testament into Zulu. These translations were not executed in a perfunctory manner. Colenso never trusted to his own wording. He had taken some naked young savages from their kraals on condition that they should be allowed to stay with him for five years, and had educated them into intelligent and devoted fellow-labourers. He passed every word of his translations through their mouths, and while adhering more or less to his phraseology, they "would introduce also those nicer idioms which at once mark the difference between the work of a European and a native." He would never rest till he had satisfied himself, however long it might take; and we need hardly wonder that one of his native assistants while greatly admiring "that Paul," declared that he always got a headache when he helped to translate his epistles!\*

All this evidence of the intimate relations that subsisted from the first between Colenso and his natives will prepare us to find him entering with the warmest interest into a

\* See *Remarks upon the recent proceedings and charge of Robert, Lord Bishop of Cape Town, &c.* By J. W. COLENZO, &c. London. 1864.

controversy, which he appears to have found ready to hand on his arrival, concerning the proper treatment of polygamist converts to Christianity. "In daily familiar intercourse with heathens and converts from heathenism" he had come to realise very distinctly that to require a convert to divorce all his wives but one, as a condition of baptism, was to require him, on the threshold of the Christian Church, to do violence to his own conscience and outrage the native sense of justice and of honour. The arguments, however, by which he supported his conclusion were unimpeachably orthodox. The Scriptures and the Fathers were called to the rescue. Monogamy, as the ordinance of Eden and as alone consonant with the Christian ideal, must of course be ultimately introduced, and no native Christian should be allowed to *add* to the number of his wives, but was not Abraham a polygamist? Was not David a polygamist when he wrote his most beautiful Psalms? Nay, did not the prophet insist upon the fact that God had given him (David) all Saul's wives, as well as his own, as a special mark of divine favour? How could he (Colenso) read such passages as these to his natives, if he had insisted on their divorcing all their wives but one? \*

The leaven is working, then. Scriptural authority is still recognised, but we see that when it comes into conflict with the "testimony of the holy spirit," whether that testimony is borne by white lips or black, it will have to yield. Colenso searches the Scriptures and the Fathers for arguments in favour of what he knows—from "daily familiar intercourse with heathens," and otherwise—to be right and true, and if at any time he should fail to find what he seeks it will be so much the worse for the Scriptures and the Fathers!

Polygamy, under the special circumstances, was an

\* These views, maintained in public and private from the first, were printed and published by Colenso at a time when, one would think, the conclusions must have appeared to him a good deal sounder than the argument. See *A Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury upon the proper treatment of cases of Polygamy, &c.* By J. W. COLENZO, &c. London. 1862.

institution over which Colenso was not disinclined to throw the ægis of divine authority and approval, and he could therefore read some passages of the Bible to his Zulus which might otherwise have caused him much perplexity. But there are other institutions accepted with equal frankness by the Old Testament writers, not so easy to accept as appropriate even amongst recent Zulu converts. For instance, Colenso read to one of his assistants—with a view to getting it into good idiomatic Zulu for his translation—the passage, “If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money.” But the Zulu’s “whole soul revolted against the notion, that the Great and Blessed God, the merciful Father of all mankind, would speak of a servant or maid as mere ‘money,’ and allow a horrible crime to go unpunished, because the victim of the brutal usage had survived a few hours.”\* Colenso said he supposed Moses really wrote these words himself and used the formula “Jehovah said unto Moses,” because he thought his ideas rose in his heart by the inspiration of God. But, adds Colenso, when relating this incident, “this was . . . a very great strain upon the cord which bound me to the ordinary belief in the historical veracity of the Pentateuch.”

Or again, when Colenso and his Zulu were at work on the story of the deluge, the latter looked up and said, “Is all that true?” and the Bishop was brought face to face with ancient doubts which he hoped he had laid for ever. He had been troubled by such questions long ago in England, but had satisfied his mind “sufficiently for practical purposes” (however much that may be) with the ordinary evasions of the commentaries. “Practical purposes,” however, are not the same in England and in Africa, and the allowance of conviction which is “sufficient” for them may likewise vary. Besides Colenso had studied geology since those days. “Shall a man speak lies

\* *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua, &c.* Pt. I. p. 9.

in the name of the Lord?" he said to himself. He dared not do it. "I gave him, however, such a reply as satisfied him for the time [one wonders what it was!] without throwing any discredit upon the general veracity of the Bible history." \*

What would all this lead to? Colenso had no idea. He was deeply troubled. He was determined to face the whole question like a man. But he had to go forth, not knowing whither he went. There were others, however, who knew pretty well where he was going—and did not think it was the land of Promise! Bishop Gray, of Capetown, Colenso's Metropolitan, was not a man to let even the faintest indication of heresy pass unobserved, and nearer home too there were very keen eyes intent upon its detection. In 1858 one of Colenso's clergy complained of his heretical teaching concerning the Eucharist. But on this occasion the Metropolitan assumed a conciliatory attitude, though much regretting the language that his Suffragan had used. But a little later (Nov. 20, 1860) we find him writing: "Natal is a very wilful, headstrong man, and loose, I fear, in his opinions upon vital points." And again on Jan. 1, 1861: "I am very anxious about Natal. His views are dangerous. I fear that we may have taught in Africa 'another Gospel which is not another.' It is curious and painful to see how the reaction of his mind from the utter Calvinism in which he was brought up, is driving him to the contemplation of God solely as Love, the Loving Father of all creation,—into opinions which seem to me to undermine the whole Gospel scheme—no Atonement in the true sense of the word—no need of any—no eternity of punishment—ultimate universal salvation. I do not say that he has worked out all this into a scheme, but I think he speculates most dangerously upon these points."† Let us give Bishop Gray credit for penetration at least!

\* *Op. cit.*, pp. vii., viii.

† *Life of Robert Gray, Bishop of Cape Town.* Rivingtons, 1876. Vol. II. pp. 20, 21.

Not long afterwards the storm came. Colenso published his *Commentary on the Romans*,\* in which he formally recanted the profession of faith in eternal torment which he had made to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1853, declaring that he could now only lay his hand upon his mouth and cherish a hidden hope that God might hold in reserve remedial disciplines in a future life which should ultimately draw all His children to Him. There were other heresies in the book likewise. The doctrines of justification and predestination which are found in the Epistle to the Romans by many liberal as well as by orthodox readers, were translated or explained away by Colenso. "The justice of his conclusions," wrote Kuenen with reference to this book, "may be disputed. But he could not escape them without either freeing himself completely from the apostolic authority, or else becoming more of a dogmatist and less of a human being himself."† Colenso was not prepared to "free himself completely from the apostolic authority," but that other "cord," which had held him to a belief in the substantial accuracy of the narratives of the Pentateuch had at last broken under the strain to which it had been submitted.

Colenso had been deep in German criticism of the Pentateuch—especially orthodox criticism. He had been deep, too, in personal investigations as to the possibility of the events recorded in the Pentateuch. His position amongst a pastoral people enabled him to realise with singular vividness and minuteness what it really was that was recorded, and what it involved. The result was a definite conviction that the detailed statements in the Pentateuch were not true, and therefore could not be inspired.

Having reached this conclusion Colenso felt that he must

\* *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans newly Translated, and Explained from a Missionary Point of View.* By the Right Rev. J. W. COLENZO, D.D., Bishop of Natal. Cambridge and London 1861, also at Ekukanyeni, Natal.

† See an article by Kuenen on "De Kerkelijke beweging in Engeland" in *De Gids* for 1865. Vol. III. I shall have occasion to refer to this article gain more than once.



speak. He had counted the cost of speaking. "It would be no light thing for me, at my time of life, to be cast adrift upon the world, and have to begin life again under heavy pressure and amidst all unfavourable circumstances,—to be separated from many of my old friends, to have my name cast out as evil even by some of them, and to have it trodden under foot as an unclean thing by others, who do not know me,—not to speak of the pain it would cause me to leave a work like this, which has been committed to me in this land, to which my whole heart and soul have been devoted, and for which, as it seemed, God had fitted me in some measure more than for others,—a work in which I would joyfully still, if it please God, spend and be spent."\*

Mr. Matthew Arnold subsequently explained that there was no occasion for Colenso to do anything involving such terrible consequences at all; and referred him to the saying of the Hebrew sage, "If thou hast heard a word, let it die with thee. And be bold, it will not burst thee!"† But constitutions differ. There are men—and Colenso was one of them—whom it *would* burst to be conscious of living a life every act of which had become tainted with insincerity and unreality, and to whom no life could escape this taint if consciously dedicated to the support of a system fit to "edify" (?) the multitude, but held in benevolent contempt by the apostles of light who work it. There are men—and Colenso was one of them—who cannot breathe in an atmosphere of esoteric enlightenment, and profound reticence towards the profane—not because they have the itch of the babbler's tongue, but because the *suppressio veri* becomes a *suggestio falsi* that poisons the moral nature of him who palters with it, that is treachery to the cause he has sworn to serve, that confounds the simplicity of human speech and shakes the foundations of mutual trust.

So Colenso (*O sancta simplicitas!*) thought he was bound

\* Extract from a letter printed in the Preface to Part I. of "*The Pentateuch, &c.*"

† See "The Bishop and the Philosopher" by Matthew Arnold in *Macmillan's Magazine* for Jan., 1863. It was this article that called out Mr. W. R. Greg's "Truth versus Edification."

to make his position clear to himself and to all whom it might concern, and to take the consequences.

In 1862 he came to England with his family, and in the autumn of the same year Bishop Gray also arrived (on other business) in England, sorely perplexed and exercised by the Commentary on the Romans, concerning which he had been in correspondence with Colenso, and for which he contemplated the possibility of his having to "try" him.

And now the first part of Colenso's great work on the Pentateuch\* burst upon the world—episcopal and other—like a bomb-shell. The Preface to this "last sad book of the Bishop of Natal," as Bishop Gray called it, recapitulated in ever memorable words the circumstances which had led the author to his searching examination of the composition and historical credibility of the Pentateuch; declared with simple and manly directness his conviction that the truths of religion rested on far other foundations than the accuracy of the records of the Pentateuch, and demanded in the name of common decency that if the facts on which he had insisted in the body of his work were in the main substantiated the clergy of the Church of England should no longer be called upon explicitly or implicitly to deny them. "*We*, indeed, who are already under the yoke, may have for a time to bear it, however painful it may be, while we struggle and hope on for deliverance. But what youth of noble mind, with a deep yearning for truth, and an ardent desire to tell out the love of God to man, will consent to put himself voluntarily into such fetters?"†

The book itself was a truly remarkable one. Occupied chiefly with the story of the Exodus, it submitted the Biblical narratives to such a searching examination as no previous scholar is ever known to have conducted. Colenso knew all about sheep and cattle runs, and could see what was meant by a population of two and a half millions

\* *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined.* By the Right Rev. JOHN WILLIAM COLENZO, D.D., Bishop of Natal. London 1862—1879.

† *Op. cit.* p. xxxvi.

wandering about a barren district in a single body and accompanied by their flocks and herds. Even his greatest enemies did not deny that he understood how to manipulate statistics and could tell whether the number of "first-borns" agreed with the number of adult males. These and other lines of enquiry Colenso pursued to the bitter end, leaving nothing vague, and liable to vague evasion. And the result was (as we shall see) to throw a light upon the character of the narratives in question which was new even to the most learned and unprejudiced students of the Old Testament, and by which the general public was simply thunder-struck!

Most of my readers will remember the extraordinary impression produced by this book. Its abiding record is in the two hundred and twenty-three entries in the British Museum Catalogue under "Colenso," the great majority of which are cross references to "answers" which appeared in 1862—3.

The rage and horror of clerical and orthodox England was only natural. But Colenso had to encounter coldness or ridicule from quarters whence he could hardly have expected anything but encouragement, or, at the worst, respectful silence.

Mr. Matthew Arnold, in the article already referred to, declared that "the uncritical spirit of our race" had performed "a great public act of self-humiliation, in sending forth as its scapegoat into the wilderness, amidst a titter from educated Europe, the Bishop of Natal." His "weak trifling," Mr. Arnold was good enough to inform us, failed to comply with either of the two conditions which alone could justify its production. It did not "edify the uninstructed" and it did not "inform the instructed" (*Macmillan*, Vol. VII., pp. 241, 253, 256).\*

Now, for Mr. Arnold to admit that he had himself been

\* One might be inclined to ask why a man may not "inform the uninstructed," but this is precisely the task which Mr. Arnold (in his admirable arrangements for the general conduct of human affairs) had assigned to the "*Zeitgeist*," and it was presumptuous for Colenso to interfere.

"informed" on any subject by a Bishop would certainly involve the "public act of self-humiliation" which could hardly be expected from him. But amongst "instructed" persons, with reference to Old Testament studies, he will probably allow a place to Professor Kuenen; and that scholar was proud to declare himself "informed" by Colenso's book in a way which materially helped him to hasten on the revolution in Old Testament studies with which his name is so closely associated.

Germany was supercilious. "Not much that is new in it." "Behind the scholarship of the day." "Very inferior to Ewald," and so on. But Kuenen (to whom I owe this account of German opinion) denounced such "arrant idolatry of '*Wissenschaft*' and '*Wissenschaftlichkeit*,'" and, with his usual sagacity, declared that Colenso's book was in an emphatic and special sense *a deed*,\* and that it must be reckoned with and estimated as such. Moreover, he declared that so far from being barren of results to "scholarship," this book had demonstrated the necessity of a revision of their theories by Ewald, Bunsen, Bleek, and Knobel, man by man, for it had demonstrated the unsoundness of the foundations upon which they had built.

The specific contribution thus made to Biblical studies by Part I. of *The Pentateuch*, &c., grows immediately out of the special character of the inquiry therein pursued. The relentless and exhaustive manner in which the Bishop's researches were pushed home revealed (more clearly to Kuenen's† eyes than to his own) the fact that the document which had hitherto been regarded as forming the oldest stratum of the Pentateuch, was in reality not a naively embellished and exaggerated set of traditions, but a symmetrical and highly elaborated *construction*. In fact, it was not an early and natural record, standing comparatively near to the facts, but a finished and systematic ideal representation, the latest and most artificial form into which the

\* In the article already referred to in the "*Gids*."

† See his article in the *Theologisch Tijdschrift* for 1870 (pp. 398—401) from which Colenso himself made extensive extracts in the preface to his Part VI.

traditional matter had been thrown. The momentous nature of this conclusion will be obvious to all students of recent Biblical criticism. It involves a revolution in the conception of Israel's religious history; and perhaps Colenso will owe his place in the future records of pure "scholarship" principally to the powerful, though indirect stimulus which he gave to this epoch-making change of front.\*

It is not a little remarkable, however, that Colenso himself did not perceive, and when they were pointed out to him did not accept, these inferences from his own researches. It was not until quite the end of his life that, by a different line of reasoning, he came to substantially the same conclusion concerning the "stratification" of the Pentateuchal narratives as that which had meanwhile been expounded and defended by Kuenen, Graf, Duhm, Wellhausen, Reuss, and a host of other writers.

Early in 1863, Part II. of the *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua* appeared, and it was followed in the same year by Parts III. and IV., and in 1865 by Part V.; together with a popular edition of the whole five parts.

In these successive works Colenso brought within the reach of English readers a vast store of materials for the criticism of the Pentateuch; and in two years accomplished a work in familiarising the English-speaking public with the methods and results of Biblical criticism, in dispelling prejudices and in stimulating a free and healthy interest in Old Testament studies, which a whole generation of scholars might be proud of accomplishing.

But it was characteristic of Colenso to work out to the very last any task which he took up. In the cause of truth and justice he knew no weariness himself, and he expected his readers to be like him. To him there was no common measure between the expenditure of time and toil and the discovery and elucidation of truth, whether he was writing on the origin of Hebrew customs or the origin of Kafir wars. Part VI. (1871) and Part VII. (1879) made

\* Cf. the article on "The Literature of Israel," *Modern Review*, January, 1883.

still greater demands upon the reader's time than their predecessors. Part I. was under 200 pages, Part VII. was over 870 pages. The sturdiest readers began to feel that life was short.

Moreover, while falling in with the rising school of criticism as far as the legislative portions of the Pentateuch are concerned, Colenso had gone off on what he himself came at last to recognise as a false track with regard to its narrative portions. The great antiquity which he assigned to the "Book of Origins" was closely associated with his peculiar views as to the early and in many cases Davidic authorship of the "Elohistic" Psalms, the Phœnician origin of the divine name Yahveh (Jehovah), the spuriousness of that venerable document of Hebrew antiquity, the "song of Deborah," and the comparatively late origin of the "Ten Commandments." He was himself fully aware that "our whole conception of the development of religion in Israel will be greatly affected by the date assigned to these portions of the Pentateuch [*i.e.*, the narrative portions of the Book of Origins]" (Part VII., pp. xxx., xxxi.), and when he changed his views on this subject he must have felt that, as the basis of a constructive scheme, his great work suffered from an almost radical defect.

But it is high time we returned to Kuenen's pregnant saying that the *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua* was a *deed*. It was perfectly well understood and accepted as such by the clergy of England and South Africa. It was a challenge. Colenso had flung down his iron gauntlet, and made all England ring with the sound. It might be well to refute the book, but the essential thing was to condemn the author. There could be and there was no manner of doubt about this. In the preface to Part II. Colenso wrote, "I assert . . . without fear of contradiction, that there are multitudes of the more intelligent clergy, who do not believe in the reality of the Noachian Deluge, as described in the book of Genesis. Yet did ever a layman hear his clergyman speak out distinctly what he thought, and say plainly from the pulpit what he himself believed, and what he

would have them believe, on this point? Did ever a *Doctor* or *Bishop* of the Church do this—at least, in the present day? . . . Have you ever heard your minister—able, earnest, excellent, as you know him to be—tell out plainly to his people the truth which he knows himself about these things?" What a flutter in the dovescotes such language from a bishop must cause! Clearly it was useless to argue and refute, and most needful to prosecute and eject him! Meanwhile he could at least be "inhibited" by the Bishops.

Bishop Gray was not amongst those who attempted to "answer" his suffragan. But he returned to Cape Town, erected an ecclesiastical court, over which he himself presided, summoned Colenso before it to be prosecuted by three clergymen, condemned, and ultimately deposed and excommunicated him. Colenso was in England. He did not defend himself, but simply protested against the proceedings as illegal, declined to submit himself in any shape or form, and appealed to the Committee of Privy Council.

It is impossible not to feel sorry for Bishop Gray. He had himself created the See of Natal, and it was at his recommendation that Colenso had been appointed Bishop. He had been on terms of affectionate intimacy with his suffragan, and was deeply and genuinely shocked by his opinions. But it is equally impossible to deny that his conduct throughout this affair was masterful and high-handed to the last degree; while he swelled the hue and cry that was raised against Colenso so lustily that the latter declares "I found it necessary, after reading the vehement charge, to turn for a while to the quiet reading of my own books, that I might know myself again, and satisfy myself that I was not really such a monster of iniquity as is here depicted."\* But what is hardest to forgive is the attempt which was made under his countenance, and apparently by his direction, to alienate Colenso's faithful natives from him. Here is the account sent by one of them to his absent friend and master under date of May 29, 1864. "The other day, May 10, there came the Bishop of Cape Town along with

\* *Remarks on the Recent Proceedings, &c.*



Mr. Robertson [who acted as his interpreter, the Bishop knowing nothing of Zulu]. . . . They came in both together into the printing-office, and looked at my work. Afterwards we went out together with them in the afternoon; and we talked with Mr. Robertson, and asked, 'Where is the Bishop [of Cape Town] going to?' Said he, 'Aha! that Bishop has come to put all things properly. For Sobantu [Colenso] has gone astray greatly; I don't suppose that he will ever come back here.' Again he said, 'The Bishop has come to tell the people to abandon the teaching of Sobantu; for Sobantu has gone astray exceedingly; he has rebelled; he does not believe in God our Father, and in Jesus Christ our Lord.' William\* and I, however, contradicted, saying, 'As to Sobantu, we know that he, for his part, is a man who believes exceedingly. When has *that* come upon him?' Said he, 'When he was in England he rebelled; his book, too, speaks badly.' I wish now, to hear plainly whether, indeed, they have spoken truth or not, Mr. Robertson and others, to wit, that you no longer believe. But I know that there is not a word of truth in what they say. Just the one thing is, that we believe in God our Father, who knows everything."†

This was when Bishop Gray was in Colenso's diocese to give effect to his "sentence."

I shall not enter upon the technicalities of the legal proceedings either in Africa or England. The upshot of it was that Bishop Gray's and Bishop Colenso's "letters patent" were found to be alike informal and incapable of conferring legal privileges or imposing legal obligations upon them. Bishop Gray's proceedings were from first to last null and void in law. An attempt to withhold Colenso's salary likewise failed, though it detained him for some time in England, thereby enabling him to "fire another barrel of his revolver," as he put it in a letter to Kuenen, or to leave Part V. of the *Pentateuch*, &c., "as a token of farewell

\* This William was the original "intelligent native" of *Pentateuchal* fame.

† *Remarks*, &c., pp. 93, 94.

at once to [his] friends and to [his] adversaries," as he more decorously expressed it in his preface.

And so at last Colenso returned, legally entitled to perform his duties and enjoy his salary without let or hindrance from Robert, Bishop of Cape Town, or any one else. But did all other difficulties disappear with the legal ones?

We have seen that in the preface to Part I. (subsequent to the celebrated judgment of the Court of Arches on *Essays and Reviews*) Colenso had declared that he regarded it as impossible for any "youth of noble mind, with a deep yearning for truth, and an ardent desire to tell out the love of God to man," to "consent to put himself voluntarily into such fetters" as were imposed on her clergy by the Church of England. In the preface to Part II. his language was still more emphatic.

But what are they [the clergy] to do under these circumstances—those, I mean, who have their eyes open to the real facts of the case, and who cannot bear to utter what they know to be untrue in the face of God and the congregation? Many, probably, will get rid of the difficulty, with satisfaction to their own minds in some way, by falling back upon the notion above referred to, that the account in Genesis is a legendary narrative, however incorrect and unhistorical, of some real matter of fact in ancient days. Others—though I imagine not many—will justify themselves in still using such a form of prayer, though they know it to be unreal and unmeaning, by considering that they are acting in a merely *official* capacity, as ministers of the National Church, and administrators of the laws which the main body of the Church has approved, and has not yet rescinded.

But what shall be said to those who cannot conscientiously adopt either of the above methods of relieving themselves from the burden of the present difficulty, and yet feel it to be impossible to continue any longer to use such words in a solemn address to the Almighty? I see no remedy for these, but to *omit such words*—to disobey the law of the Church on this point, and take the consequences of the act—should any over-zealous brother-clerk or layman drag them before a court, and enforce a penalty, in the face of an indignant nation.\*

\* Part II. p. xcii.

After this it must surely be with keen disappointment, and indeed with something like dismay, that we find Colenso in the preface to Part III. appearing to declare that he is not himself amongst those for whom this last piece of advice was intended. He intimates that he can himself adopt one of the above methods—he does not say which—of escaping from his own dilemma, though there may be some “of more scrupulous conscience” who could not do so, and whom he could therefore only advise to break the law and take the consequences (Part III., p. xxxvi.). This was in answer to a memorial from “the great majority of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England” requesting Colenso to resign his office, inasmuch as it appeared to the memorialists that he was by his own admission unable to perform its prescribed duties without doing violence to his conscience. We should have been prepared for the answer that the legally prescribed duties of an office may differ widely from its moral obligations, and may even become inconsistent with them, but hardly for the declaration that the author of the words we have quoted could find nothing that his conscience prevented his complying with in the legally prescribed duties themselves.\*

Reconciling himself, it would appear, to the Prayer-Book as it stood, Colenso returned to his work. His “large and attentive congregations” in the cathedral church of Maritzburg listened to such heresies as that men ought not to pray to Christ,† and were provided by their Bishop with hymn books‡ containing only one trinitarian hymn each. Those who preferred it joined the African Church set up by Bishop Gray, who had appointed an African Bishop (of Maritzburg); and the Anglican Bishop (of Natal) went on

\* Cf. further *The Pentateuch*, &c., Part I, p. xii. (text and note) and the Bishop’s letter on the *Voysey* judgment in the *Theological Review*, vol. viii., pp. 582-4. The inherent moral viciousness of our present ecclesiastical system would not be better illustrated than it is by the shifts into which it drove so robust a conscience and so clear a mind as Colenso’s.

† See *Natal Sermons*. A series of discourses, &c. By J. W. COLENZO, &c. London: 1866. Second series, 1868.

‡ Two separate hymn books, alike in the marked absence of orthodoxy, if not presence of heterodoxy, that characterises them.

working at his *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua*, and translating and annotating Dutch books on the Bible,\* published a volume of popular lectures on *The Pentateuch and the Moabite Stone*,† produced an elaborate reply‡ to the semi-official answer to his book that had at last appeared in the so-called "Speaker's Commentary," continued his work for the natives and seemed to have reached calm waters again.

But, alas, he was soon to learn that the champion of justice may have to reckon with a still more bitter and fanatical opposition than has to be encountered by the champion of truth.

Where two widely different civilisations come into close contact with each other there is scope for the exercise of the noblest virtues, and for the indulgence of some of the most ignoble vices of human nature.

To be in constant relations with an "inferior" race will bring out the best or the worst that is in a man. He may become to his "inferiors" the very embodiment of a higher wisdom and power, waking new thoughts and opening a new life to them, and himself becoming the object of a devotion and a trust like that which young children give to their parents. But, on the other hand, the practically irresponsible exercise of power has a subtle force to corrupt the sense of justice and of moral obligation. Under circumstances to which the conventional rules of morality hardly apply, a great man will be thrown back upon the fundamental dictates of justice, generosity, and tenderness; but a small man will feel that he is released from all moral restraints whatever. The "nigger" stands outside the pale within which alone he recognises the binding force of mutual obligations. His inherent "supe-

\* *The Worship of Baalim in Israel*, translated from OORT. *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua*, translated from KUENEN. 1865. *Contributions to the Criticism of the Pentateuch*, in part translated from KOSTERS. 1873.

† With appendices. London: 1873.

‡ *The New Bible Commentary by Bishops and other Clergy of the Anglican Church critically examined*, by J. W. COLENZO, &c. London: 1871, &c. (Six parts.)

riority" absolves him from the necessity of observing any terms with the savage. He resents as insolence or stamps down as incipient rebellion in him, what he would admit to be reasonable and just in even the poorest or most abject European. Add to this that he is naturally distrustful of the "nigger" whom he treats in this way, firmly believing that if he had his chance he would stick at nothing that hatred or inborn barbarism might dictate. Here we have all the elements of a "scare" ready to hand—a scare which may urge men of no better and no worse character than average Englishmen into deeds of injustice and cruelty which will seem absolutely incredible (and accordingly will not be believed) amongst their brethren at home, of like passions but not of like opportunities with themselves. It is only thus that we can account for the native "policy" of diplomatists who seem in their dealings with Europeans to be honourable men, and for the barbarities perpetrated by colonial troops when the diplomatists have let them loose.

In such a society as I have described let any man have the courage to look facts in the face and demand equal justice for white and black, and he will have to encounter opposition, misrepresentation, and slander, the virulence of which has no parallel even amongst theologians. The feelings once entertained towards the "abolitionists" in the United States, and the fury recently occasioned amongst Anglo-Indians by the "Ilbert Bill," may serve, in different degrees, to assist the imagination in conceiving the position of the colonist who opposes the "native policy" of his rulers.

Colenso had been eighteen years in the colony before he took any prominent part in politics. This must be accounted for partly by his preoccupation with his own more immediate work, partly by the fact that no crisis had occurred during his residence of a character to force the general question of native policy upon his attention, but most of all, perhaps, by his personal confidence in Mr. (now Sir Theophilus) Shepstone, who was Secretary for Native Affairs in the colony.

In 1873, however, events took place which rudely shook

Colenso out of this tranquil confidence, and compelled him to take such a stand that "there has never, during the last nine years, been a break or a pause, in the enmity and the slander"\* heaped upon him by those whose evil doings he has thwarted or exposed.

I have no intention of entering in detail into the miserable history of our wars in South Africa, but it is due to the cause of justice and mercy, no less than to the memory of Colenso, that a few words should be said.

In 1873, then, a Kafir chief of the name of Langelibelele, residing on Natal territory, became the object of dislike and suspicion to the Natal officials. The specific charges made against him were very trifling, but when summoned to headquarters to answer them he made excuses for not complying—we shall see presently with what good reason—and was therefore regarded as a "rebel." A military force was at once sent to secure him; whereupon he with all the fighting men of his tribe fled in panic over the mountains, leaving their old men, women, and children behind them, in perfect confidence that they would not be molested. A small force intercepted the fugitives in a mountain pass (Langelibelele himself not being present), and a skirmish ensued in which three soldiers were killed, the natives being the first to fire. This was regarded as "murder" by the colonists, and the "youthful enthusiasm" of the irregular colonial levies was so roused that it had to display itself by feats performed in the defenceless territory abandoned by the warriors.

The women and children with the remaining men were hunted out of their places of refuge with circumstances of great cruelty or smoked to death in caves. Then the survivors were driven down to Pietermaritzburg, many of them dropping down and dying on the way, to be held as prisoners.† Some few had escaped to the peaceful little

\* *Natal Witness* for June 23, 1883.

† They had been stripped of all their personal possessions, down to their blankets and clothes, for the benefit of the natives who were acting as our allies in "eating up" the tribe. Amongst these was our old friend *Pakade*. What an astonishing aptitude for understanding the Colonial Policy that

tribe of Putini. This was enough to involve the latter in their "rebellion," and accordingly our troops swept upon them, seized all their possessions, and drove them, too,—men, women, and children—down to Pietermaritzburg.

At last Langalibelele himself fell into "our" hands, through the treachery of another chief, was tried by an anomalous court, in which certain natives sat as assessors, and was condemned to imprisonment for life.

Colenso watched the trial narrowly, and soon perceived the contradictory character of the evidence of one of the chief witnesses against Langalibelele. (His training in analysing the narratives of the Pentateuch doubtless did him good service here!) This led him to make private inquiries amongst his own natives, and in the end to represent the case to his friend Mr. Shepstone. The matter was gone into privately. Mr. Shepstone himself confessed that Colenso's informant made out his case. The evidence of a chief witness was shattered. No action, however, was taken in consequence. But worse than this was to come. In the course of the trial frequent reference had been made by natives to "the affair of Matshana," as a reason why Langalibelele had been afraid to obey the summons to meet Mr. Shepstone. This phrase, which was wholly unexplained by anything known to the European inhabitants of the Colony about this Matshana (a refugee chief living in Zululand), excited Colenso's interest and induced him to make inquiries. To his surprise and horror he heard from natives who came from different districts, and gave independent evidence, the same story. Sixteen years before, Mr. John Shepstone (brother of Theophilus) had made a treacherous attempt to seize or kill Matshana, under pretext of a friendly interview. Matshana had narrowly escaped. Many of his people had been slain.\* This was

culminated under Sir Bartle Frere this chief had shown, when he remarked that the Lord's Prayer would be very suitable for use on public occasions—but he should like to know how gunpowder was made!—Cf. Sup. p. 609.

\* These charges were subsequently made the subject of official inquiry. It was found that Mr. John Shepstone had been guilty of the treacherous attempt to seize Matshana. That in this attempt he had the sanction of



why Langalibelele, when ordered to come down to meet Mr. Shepstone, had "rebelled" by sending a polite excuse!

Colenso laid all these facts concerning his brother before Mr. Shepstone, and was met with an indignant denial, but no offer of investigation. Nothing more could be done privately. Colenso "allowed a friendship of twenty years to be broken for the sake of one nigger," and set himself doggedly to work to expose the iniquities of which he had become aware.

His exhaustive investigation of the whole affair, conducted in the face of a stubborn official opposition that threw every impediment in his way, and a fire of hostile criticism, is recorded in his printed (but not published) treatise *Langalibelele and the Amahlubi Tribe, &c.\** A brief but admirable summary is given by Miss F. E. Colenso in the early chapters of her *History of the Zulu War*.

Having failed to secure redress in Natal, Colenso came over to England to lay the whole matter before the Colonial Secretary (Lord Carnarvon).

What would his reception be? He was still known in England simply as the author of the *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua*. When he left us in 1865 he had said, "If I should return, a few years hence, it is my firm belief that . . . I shall find . . . my fellow-countrymen and fellow-Churchmen ashamed of that religious fear and frenzy, which has raged so furiously in these our times. . . . Nay, I am not without hope that some even of those who have been most severe upon me . . . may give to me again the right hand of fellowship . . . as a fellow-labourer with

his superiors. That "the weight of direct evidence" was altogether in favour of the supposition that he had attempted to shoot Matshana, but that as he was a very good shot the fact of his not having hit him might be taken in proof of his own assertion that he only fired the gun into the air as a signal. Mr. John Shepstone was severely reprimanded for his "underhand manoeuvres,"—and in due time promoted to the important post of "Secretary for Native Affairs," which he still occupies. Cf. Miss F. E. Colenso's *History of the Zulu War*, chap. vii., and the work mentioned in the next note.

\* I have placed this unofficial Blue-book (which was printed for the convenience of the Colonial Secretary and circulated amongst a few persons interested in native affairs) in the British Museum.

them for the Kingdom of God" (*Pentateuch, &c.*, Part V. xlv., xlvi.). But the England of 1865 had learned nothing and forgotten nothing in 1874. Colenso was "inhibited" from preaching by the Bishops. He might not give a word of spiritual counsel and encouragement—after an absence of all these years—to the many friends who loved and honoured him, without the storm of fanaticism bursting and howling around him as of old. And after preaching in the oasis of Balliol College Chapel (where no Bishop could rise up and trouble him), he patiently but sadly submitted to his fate, and confined himself to the mission on which he had come.

The case which Colenso laid before Lord Carnarvon was so overwhelming that, after listening to the fullest explanations on the other side, his Lordship sent orders that the Putini tribe should be restored and as far as possible compensated—(an order which, owing to the untiring exertions of Major Durnford, had been partially at least anticipated by the action of the Colonial Government)—that Langa-libelele should be released from Robben Island, where he was imprisoned, and that when proper preparations had been made any members of his tribe who wished it should be allowed to join him again and settle in some suitable district. This was avowedly less than strict justice demanded, but it was all that it seemed to Lord Carnarvon prudent to insist on.

So Colenso returned, having apparently succeeded in this mission to a very important extent. In 1865 he had been met on his entrance into Natal "by a far more numerous cavalcade than ever welcomed a governor," but "bitter hostility" greeted him when, in 1874, he "returned from his second visit to Europe as the representative of a policy of humanity too complete and far-seeing to be understood by those whose minds had been half-poisoned by interested misrepresentation." \*

\* *Natal Witness* for June 23rd, 1883. It is encouraging to be able to quote such words from a Colonial paper, and to know that this same paper—which once prided itself on giving Colenso the lie direct—has itself for some time been an advocate of the policy of justice.

The victory Colenso had won by such dauntless courage and perseverance was but a barren one. Lord Carnarvon's orders were not absolutely disobeyed. Langalibelele was released from Robben Island—and imprisoned in the nearest convenient place on the mainland. The members of his tribe will perhaps be allowed to join him when the preparations are made—but no one is making them yet.

The explanation of the fact that Lord Carnarvon, while in no way modifying his own view of the question, allowed his orders to be so insolently evaded must be looked for in the political necessities laid on him by his great scheme for unifying South Africa. Miss Colenso points out how important Mr. Shepstone's co-operation and the practical ratification of his acts were supposed to be for the success of this project, and makes it seem only too certain that we find in these considerations the clue to the action (or rather the inaction) of the Colonial Office.

Be this as it may the policy of consolidating South Africa was soon pushed on with a vengeance. A glance at the map will show that the annexation (however named) of Zululand must form a part of it. In 1876 Sir Theophilus Shepstone had set about the annexation of the Transvaal, and with the Transvaal we "annexed" an old outstanding boundary-dispute between the Boers and the Zulus. The Zulu King, Cetshwayo,—a monarch who had done great things for his nation, in reducing almost to the vanishing point the execution of the barbarous criminal code and the indulgence of the mischievous spirit of warfare\* which his predecessors had instituted or fostered—was a staunch ally of our own. It was at our urgent and repeated request that he had abstained from taking the law into his own hands and settling the boundary dispute with the Boers as he very well knew how.

But after the annexation our views of the merits of Cetshwayo's claims underwent a marked change, and when

\* Cetshwayo's "national anthem" is "He keeps quiet for himself. He does not begin to attack anyone." But I do not know what the history of this cry (which is given on p. 524 of Colenso's papers on Cetshwayo) may be.

we appointed a commission to inquire into and settle the affair it was generally assumed that the Boer claims would be allowed. Sir Bartle Frere, our High Commissioner, was quite of this opinion; and as he did not for a moment suppose that the Zulus would quietly submit to being turned out of the portion of the disputed lands which they were occupying, he openly prepared for war. But the evidence on the Zulu side turned out to be too overwhelming; and the award was given against the Boers.

This rendered some other pretext for war necessary. It was found in negotiations that were going on at the time between Cetshwayo and the British authorities concerning certain men who had followed some Zulu women (who were criminals by Zulu law) into Natal territory, seized them and carried them back to Zululand, where they were tried and executed. The British authorities desired Cetshwayo to surrender these men, and Cetshwayo wished to pay a fine of cattle instead. The matter was still under apparently friendly discussion.

Our High Commissioner, then, had to announce to Cetshwayo that the award as to the disputed territory was in his favour. In doing so he took the opportunity (to the surprise and mortification of the home Government) of presenting him with an *ultimatum*! He demanded, amongst other things, a fine of fifteen hundred cattle, the surrender of the men who had violated British territory in pursuit of the women, and the disbanding of the Zulu army. A space of thirty days was allowed for the execution of these orders. Cetshwayo promised compliance with some of the terms, and would consult his chiefs as to others. But the limit had been fixed so as to make compliance impossible, and punctuality was insisted on. The troops had already taken their positions in Zulu territory in anticipation of the non-fulfilment of the terms, and as soon as ever the thirty days were over the invasion was hastened on.

The first victories of the Zulus laid the colony of Natal for months helpless at the feet of the "bloodthirsty monster" whose presence had been represented as a

standing menace to its safety. The use he made of the opportunity was to send frequent messages to ask for peace and to declare that his troops had engaged against his orders. His messengers were detained as prisoners. When reinforcements came his army was destroyed, his faithful subjects were flogged and threatened with death to compel them to reveal his hiding-place, and at last he was seized—extorting from his captor the confession that he was every inch a king.\*

"It has been terrible to see this great wave of wickedness," says Colenso, "rolling on, and to be powerless to help it, to be debarred all possibility of showing the injustice of the war, until it was too late—too late to prevent the shedding of innocent blood and the ravaging of a whole country—too late to save the lives of 2,000 of our own soldiers and natives, and of 10,000 patriotic Zulus—too late to prevent the name of Englishman from becoming in the native mind the synonym for duplicity, treachery, and violence, instead of, as in the days gone by, for truth, and justice, and righteousness."†

But when at last he could make himself heard Colenso was again able to show things in their true light. Zulu and Natalian alike attributed it to his efforts that in 1883 Cetshwayo was "restored."‡

Alas! it is the same story again. The Home Government gave orders, but allowed the Colonial Government to evade them. Cetshwayo's "restoration" was a miserable mockery. Nearly half his land was taken from him and put under his inveterate foe Zibebu or the John Shepstone whom we already know. He was not allowed to have an army, and was therefore placed at the mercy of the enemy who was put under no such restriction. None of his wealth was restored to him, but he was saddled with the expense of a "resident." The arrangement was deliberately intended to break down, and to involve Cetshwayo in its fall.

\* See Miss Colenso's *History of the Zulu War*.

† Preface to "*Cetshwayo's Dutchman*," pp. xi., xii.

‡ See the Colonial Press *passim* and Cetshwayo's letters to Colenso and to Miss Colenso.

The heroic Bishop bent himself to his task once more. Sheet after sheet of closely-printed matter issued (for private circulation) from his printing press at Bishopstowe. He reprinted, analysed, and annotated every leading article, every official proclamation, every correspondent's letter, that appeared in Natal on the Zulu question. He collected information with a diligence and determination that never flagged. He printed everything. Those who wish to know the history of Cetshwayo's restoration may know it ;\* but to do so they must go into an atmosphere thick with a brutality of feeling and a recklessness of statement of which happily we have no conception here. "The truth will come back upon colonists," says the *Natal Witness*, "that the man whom they daily pierced and crucified in their midst was the warmest and truest friend that ever the colony had." Meanwhile it is a task that makes the heart bleed, to follow the history of these recent events and to think of Colenso's ebbing strength as in his noble, patient heroism he tracks up to its source and exposes every slander and misrepresentation that strikes his Zulu friends, unravels the "web of force and fraud" by which Colonial officialism seeks to hide the facts, but pays no heed to the shower of coarse abuse that rains relentlessly upon his own head.

Such were the labours in which Colenso was engaged,† till on June 23rd his daughter wrote to the Zulu King, "To-day, my brother, I have heavy news to tell you. . . .

\* I have seen these papers (which include many touching letters from Cetshwayo) through the kindness of Mr. William Shaen. I hope they may be ultimately placed in the British Museum.

† It is pleasant to think that to the last Colenso found some relief and pleasure in his critical studies. Only a very short time before his death he wrote to the Editor of this Review announcing the change in his critical conclusions as to the age of the Elohist narratives in Genesis to which I have referred in the text, and indicating the importance he attached to his conviction—based in part on the comparative faintness of the picture of Ezra given in the book called by his name, compared with the striking personality of Nehemiah—that Ezra was a mere legal figment, a "second Moses" indeed, but on that very ground a symbol rather than a personality in history. Cf. the chapters on Ezra and Nehemiah in "*The Pentateuch*," &c." Part VII.

We are orphans, all of us, our Father Sobantu having left us. You know that he was getting in years, and that he had for long carried a heavy burden—I mean the troubles of the people—a burden not fitted for a man alone. So his Father, the Almighty, saw that he was very weary, and called him, and has taken him home to rest with Him."

Miss Colenso takes comfort from the thought of the "very many hands which wish to help his orphans, and his work, too, for love of him." And I would ask my readers whether they will suffer the martyr-Bishop to have died in vain, whether they will let his heart break without its touching theirs?

PHILIP H. WICKSTEED.



## THE TALMUD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

### II.—COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PRINCIPLES.

THE illustration of the New Testament from the Talmud and other Jewish writings does not date from to-day or yesterday. A long list of the earlier attempts in this direction may be found in the *Prefatio* to J. G. Meuschen's *Novum Testamentum ex Talmude et Antiquitatibus Hebræorum illustratum*, while the more recent essays are chronicled in the *Vorwort* to A. Wünsche's *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien aus Talmud und Midrasch*. Such "illustrations" lead spontaneously to comparisons, and the resulting impression in the minds of Christian scholars is best set forth in the concise and lucid introduction to the *Horæ in Matthæum*, in J. Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ in quatuor Evangelistas*. "There are no authors," says Lightfoot of the Jewish writers, "who more shock and grieve the reader; and yet there are none who more attract and delight him. In no others is greater or equal folly shown; and yet of hardly any others is greater or equal use to be made. More bitter foes than these the teaching of the Gospel has never had and yet clearer expounders than these the text of the Gospel has not. In a word,—on their Jewish fellow-believers they bring down nothing but folly and pest and poison: but Christians, by their own art and labour, may make them most useful servants of their studies, rendering them most seasonable aid in the interpretation of the New Testament."\* That the Jews on their side were as eager

\* Non sunt autores qui lectorem magis terrent et torquent; et non sunt tamen qui magis alliciunt et delectant. Apud nullos major est aut æqua

to pour contempt upon the New Testament may be learned, for example, from the works incorporated by Wagenseil in his *Tela ignea Satanae*.

Times are changed! Whilst there are many in either camp who still maintain the old attitude of hostility, and attack without attempting to appreciate each other's position, more friendly approaches have been made here and there on either side. Some Christian scholars, astonished to find so many admirable sayings in the Talmud and Midrashim, extol the Jewish writings; and some Jewish scholars do their best to prove that the morality preached by the New Testament is the same as that commended in the Talmud. There is every cause to rejoice in these attempts; for, expressly or tacitly, they abandon the ground of traditional authority, and allow that every religion must base its claims to respect on a direct appeal to its power of raising those who profess it in the moral scale, rather than on any external sanctions of custom or authority. It is encouraging to see that this truth is winning its way to recognition.

But if we welcome the spirit in which the comparison of New Testament and Talmud is made by the scholars of whom we are speaking, we are compelled to add that its method is most unsatisfactory and barren. It consists in simply putting texts from the New Testament and Talmud respectively side by side in pairs, especially selecting the sayings of Jesus (which lend themselves most readily to this treatment) for comparison with aphorisms or injunctions from the Talmud. The resemblance is striking; and Christians may feel amused and gratified by the undisguised delight with which the Jewish scholars dwell upon it. "The truth is," they exclaim; "that Jesus taught nothing new, or at least nothing at once new and sound. His

nugacitas; et vix tamen apud nullos major aut æqua utilitas. Acriores hostes quam istos non habuit doctrina Evangelica, et tamen planiores interpretes quam istos non habet textus Evangelii. Verbo omnia: Judæis suis nihil nisi nugas propinant, et perniciem, et venenum: at Christiani arte et industria suâ eos sibi reddere possunt studiis utilissimæ famulantes, atque inservientes commodissime interpretationi Novi Testamenti.

ethics are those of the Pharisees, so admirably expounded by Hillel. What was special to himself was the morbid exaggeration of the moral commandments, together with the belief in his own Messiahship, and other delusions."

Sometimes when real or nominal Christians are told that all the petitions in the Lord's Prayer, together with many other sayings of Jesus, occur in the Talmud, they are startled beyond measure. Some of them are simply scared, as though Christianity were robbed of its crown. Others, who have little sympathy with worship or religion in any form, rub their hands in glee and declare that, after all, Christianity is nothing more than a trifling modification of Judaism.

The dismay and the triumph alike reveal a most woful superficiality; but the facts upon which they are based deserve every attention.

It is true that considerable deductions must be made from the alleged similarities. When we strike out the sayings that only half coincide with each other, and in the coincident portions simply contain some general moral precept, and when we further remove all those sayings which are drawn directly from the Old Testament teaching, the similarities which we may still trace are by no means so numerous as they appeared at first. But there still remain certain coincidences too striking to be explained by a simple appeal to the common country, language, and usages of Jesus and his apostles, on the one hand, and the men whose sayings are recorded in the Talmud, on the other. Indeed there are some cases in which we can hardly avoid suspecting that the one authority has borrowed from the other, or both from a third.

Now, although the Talmud is much later than the time of Jesus and his apostles, the idea that the former has borrowed the sayings in question from the latter is usually rejected as intrinsically absurd. "We need not urge," says Deutsch,\* "the priority of the Talmud to the New Testament, although the former was redacted at a

\* *Literary Remains*, p. 55, Note.

later period. To assume that the Talmud was borrowed from the New Testament would be like assuming that Sanskrit sprang from Latin, or that French was developed from the Norman words found in English." But Deutsch is mistaken. The supposition is by no means so foolish. The Jews and Christians had not always been as hostile to each other as they were when the Talmud was compiled, and for a long time previously. In the first and second centuries measures were concerted by the Jewish authorities to prevent the *minim*, that is the Christians (Jewish Christians of course), from uttering heresies when leading the devotions in the synagogues; and it is recorded of certain rabbis that they "charmed" wounds and diseases in the name of Jesus, or that they were accused of heresy because they had expressed admiration for sayings of Jesus. There is nothing absurd, therefore, in the supposition that sayings and ideas of Jesus, which were not specifically anti-Jewish, became the common property of the Jewish communities by the mediation Christians who still retained their connection with the synagogue, or who subsequently rejoined it. Nothing is more natural than that this should take place. Indeed we can hardly doubt that it did. May not this be the source, for instance, whence the saying came into the Talmud that pious heathens have a share in the eternal life?

But we need not enter further upon this question. Even if we assume that Jesus and his apostles borrowed from the rabbis all the expressions that occur both in the New Testament and in the Talmud, it does not prove anything. The gospel of Jesus remains an altogether new thing, and the spiritual life that he awakened is still diametrically opposed, in many respects, to the religious life that the Talmud fosters.

In using the expression "altogether new," I do not mean to deny that there is a sense in which no reformer or founder of a religion, any more than the greatest of statesmen, poets, inventors, or scholars, accomplishes any new thing. Every one of them stands on the shoulders of the generation that

has gone before, and receives from his predecessors the impulse to his teaching and the material out of which his spiritual creation is woven. Emerson's saying is strikingly true that "The great poet makes us feel our own wealth." The new things that the heroes of the spirit bring to us they produce for the most part by their way of combining and grouping the old and acknowledged truths so as to bring one into the foreground, throw another into the shade, and thus give the whole an entirely new character. Jesus himself is obviously the heir of the Israelite prophets, law-givers, and psalmists, and in proclaiming his deepest thoughts he attaches himself closely to Moses and the prophets. But for all that, his appeal—except when he was forced in his polemical encounters to adopt another method—was always to the judgment of his hearers. And well it might be, for the deepest truths of religion and morality are but the expression of man's own destiny and calling. They are written in our heart, and all the prophet can do is to bring the appeal home to us. Now the great ones of Israel had already brought home this appeal with living force up to a certain point, and both Jesus and the rabbis were their heirs, and had to carry on and complete their work. How did they respectively acquit themselves of the task? That coincidences of expression would occur between them was almost involved in the circumstances, and to point out such coincidences is of small avail unless we can show that in each case alike they represent a further carrying home of the direct appeal to the divine law written on our hearts.

With these limitations and explanations it is no paradox to assert that the very same words may be made by one man the instrument for revealing and enforcing something "altogether new," and may be in the mouth of another a mere repetition or imitation of what has gone before.

There is another reason, closely connected with the one we have considered, which makes the comparison of isolated sayings unsatisfactory. If a man is not always consistent even with himself, still less can we expect complete agreement amongst all the members of a special group. Thus

even if certain persons (*in casu* the rabbis) are of kindred faith and spirit, it by no means follows that everything which any one of them may utter, in his best or his worst moments, reflects the conviction of them all. When the Jews have the Talmudic saying cast in their teeth that "even the best heathen ought to be murdered," they very properly urge in reply that this saying was uttered by rabbi Simeon ben Jochai, a notorious foe of the Romans. But it would be quite as fair to attribute to all the rabbis the sentiment he expressed as it would be to regard their views as being fairly represented by Hillel's celebrated saying: "Whatever is hateful to you abstain from doing to your neighbour. This is the whole law, and the rest is only commentary." The question is: Does this saying fit in with the whole Talmudic conception of man's calling and destiny? Did Hillel himself really mean what he said, and show it by attaching no greater importance to all the ritual ordinances than is due to an exposition of the injunction of love to one's neighbour? If not, it may have been nothing more than the happy inspiration of a moment.\*

The real question is: What are the principles of either book? What is the character of the religion upheld in each? What is the spirit that inspires them?

The New Testament, as well as the Talmud, is inconsistent with itself. It contains varying, and sometimes very divergent, conceptions of the religious life. One book stands higher, and another lower. Often, especially in the Synoptic Gospels, contrary views are expressed side by side. If then we would understand the New Testament as a whole we must bring clearly into view the guiding principles and drift, the way of looking at things, the conception of life, which gave rise to the great religious movement which

\* In point of fact, the context shows that Hillel's remark (made, be it observed, to a heathen, not a Jew) was intended not to show the relatively small importance of studying the details of the law; but, on the contrary, to excite in the heathen the desire to devote himself to this very study. It is one of a series of sayings recorded in illustration of the tact and gentleness by which Hillel drew on half converts to a just recognition of the Jewish tradition.

we find recorded in this collection of writings, and which gives us the key to the conceptions of the divergent schools—Petrinism, Paulinism, Johannism, and their various modifications—which are therein reflected.

This vital centre for which we are seeking is unquestionably found in what we may best call "the gospel of Jesus." In endeavouring to describe what this is we may put aside, in order to keep the main point more clearly in view, all the historical questions that surround it; such as whether this or that saying is really due to Jesus himself, or whether it was simply put into his mouth by his disciples; or under what special influences, and with a view to what special occasion, this or that word was spoken. Nay, if any one chooses to assert that Jesus never existed at all, and that the image presented to us in the Gospels is a pure creation of the Christian community—a contention which I hold to be nothing short of an absurdity—even that leaves this great fact untouched:—That in the New Testament a conception of man's destiny and calling is expressed, worked out and applied—in its greatest purity in some of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the first three Gospels, and elsewhere more or less hampered, distorted, or unevenly developed—so new, so pure, so exalted, so true, that a moral re-birth of humanity dates from the time when it came into the world, and mankind has no hope of redemption unless it yields itself up to these glorious conceptions and moves forward in the direction of the Gospel.

And this, so far as I can apprehend it, is the Gospel that Jesus preached and lived:—Every human being is a child of God, male or female, bond or free, learned or unlearned, Jew or heathen, good or bad, each one is His child. And that means that to be good is the real nature of every one. If only what is already present in germ be developed, if only his destiny be fulfilled, then each one will be wholly purified. And therefore God loves each one of us. How else could it be that the Holy One should love man?



"Glory to God, salvation upon earth, and *in men* may he be well-pleased!" And therefore, too, a pure man may be the friend of sinners. How could one who loves God and all that is fair associate with what is base and hideous, did he not believe that beneath the unlovely exterior there is a hidden glory, and that the woeful to-day contains within itself the germ of a beauteous to-morrow? And because this is so, it is also God's will that not one of these should be lost.

Every human being is a child of God. And so it is his natural and healthful state to love God with all his heart, with all his understanding, with all his might, and to bring Him no divided affections. And together with God, or rather in God, it is natural for him to love the fellow-man whose needs he best knows, whom he can best help—his neighbour. For is not he his brother, a child of God like himself? No such thought can rise in our minds as that God asks too much of any man, for God asks nothing more of him than what his own heart expressly tells him is the only true and good. He can find no rest short of perfection. Self-satisfaction is never justified. "Why callest thou *me* good?" said Jesus to a virtuous but shallow admirer, who had enthusiastically addressed him as *good*. "There is none good but God." And every man who feels himself to be a child of God repeats these words of Jesus from the bottom of his heart, and with all the deeper conviction in proportion as he rises higher.

Every man is a child of God. And he is therefore to be pitied the more in proportion as he is estranged from God and is hindered by his passions or his sloth from doing the will of God. Sin manifests itself in widely different forms. In one it appears to leave the character, comparatively speaking, little affected; in another it so eats into it that it seems to be utterly destroyed. But however these comparisons may deceive us as to the nature of sin when we think of others, our own experience teaches us its fearful power and effects in every case. Sometimes we are as those who have a heavy debt to pay, sometimes as though we were

grievously sick ; sometimes it is as if we had fallen from a purer state and we are tortured by remorse ; while the worst of all is a sense of powerlessness and a fear that it can never go well with us, since evil is mightier within us than good. But this cannot be, for we are children of God and there is forgiveness, redemption, hope, even for the most guilty.

Every man is a child of God. The one great means of redemption, then, is faith, the unreserved trust in God's unquenchable love and irresistible might. We keep no reckoning with God, calculating how much we are in his debt and defining how much we may be called upon to give Him. To bargain with "our Father in Heaven" cannot so much as come into our minds. The believer has but one sorrow : that he shows too little love to Him. And yet every deed that is done in faith, or even in obedience to any noble impulse, has its infinite worth in the sight of God, for it is a pledge and symbol of our true destiny.

Every man is a child of God. And since God is the Almighty the future of every man and of all mankind is assured, for that which is of God is immortal.

Such is the content of the glad tidings brought into the world by Jesus.

On the one hand it is sadly enfeebled by my way of presenting it here, for I have tried to set it forth more or less systematically, and, as far as may be, in plain, prosaic words. Such an epitome must always have something of a scholastic air in it. It is dry. It is a body of doctrine. Now the words of Jesus never suggest anything of the kind. They glow with life. And we must never forget this absence of set system when we are studying his preaching.

On the other hand—and this is the justification of the attempt I have made—the leading principles of his teaching may become clearer to us if we distil them, so to speak, out of his images, parables, aphorisms, and paradoxes, having stripped them of all that is incidental, local, and accidental. This may be done with all the more profit, inasmuch as the gospel of Jesus was naturally clothed in the forms of

his own age, and that not only as to language and style, but as to ideas and conceptions which he shared with his contemporaries, such as belief in angels and devils, in the sacred writings of his nation, in the Messiah and the visible Kingdom of God.

No circumstances arose to force him to a clear understanding with himself as to all these points, neither was he compelled to draw all their legitimate deductions from the great moral and religious principles for which he himself contended. He did make these applications with reference to the questions with which the circumstances of his life brought him face to face, but not with reference to those which were only presented to his followers after his death. We must not forget this in attempting to estimate the attitude he assumed towards the religion of his contemporaries and towards the law which the fathers had revered and handed down.

It is often said that the significance of a reformation lies in what it annuls. The remark is a very shallow one. True reformers involuntarily hold in honour the existing usages and beliefs until they come into conflict with their own vital principles, and then they sink of themselves into the background and die of inanition. It is only when others insist on dragging them forward, or when they become positively hurtful to the spiritual life, that uncompromising war is waged against them.

It follows of necessity that reformers are not systematically consistent. While casting one thing aside they leave another equally opposed to their principles unchallenged, simply because they have never been led to pronounce judgment on it. Their attitude towards traditional beliefs and practices gradually develops, and as time goes on they are compelled, at the cost of much pain and much misunderstanding, to relinquish many things that have long been dear to them.

The brief period during which Jesus taught in public allowed no time for many questions to come up for decision which must at last have forced themselves upon him;

and we may safely assume that in outward conduct he was what we might call conservative. Instinctively following the practices in which he had grown up from childhood, he was doubtless steadily observant of the sabbath worship, and would say his daily prayers at the appointed hour. No unclean food would be set before him. He would make no journeys on the sabbath day; and if he had contracted any ceremonial uncleanness would perform the prescribed ablutions. Hence we may explain the fact that many of his followers, especially those who had associated most closely with him, believed that in strict obedience to the Law they were following out their master's teaching.

But this was an error. Through all the conflicting utterances that the controversialists of the succeeding age laid upon the lips of their master, we may see clearly enough what was the general tone of his teaching with respect to outward observances. He never defied them wantonly, but never let them stand in the way of his work. Fasting, almsgiving and sacrifice were good, if they were genuine, and if they covered no evil thoughts and gratified no love of display; but what were the laws of respectability and ceremonial purity to him if they would prevent his reclaiming the lost and going wherever he could do good?

The goal to which all this tended is obvious. Jesus could not possibly place a Jew above a heathen in virtue of his descent. The temple-worship could only be maintained as long as it nourished the devout feelings of the soul. If the preaching of Jesus should make way it was all over with the Law. And accordingly not even the most extreme Jewish utterances in the New Testament go so far as to declare the whole Law obligatory. Even where Jesus is made to say that whoever absolves men from observing the least of the commandments shall be the least in the kingdom of God, he utters a redoubtable heresy in admitting such a man into the kingdom at all, and no scribe would endorse his words.

It is only natural that the gospel of Jesus should have been very variously and very defectively understood and

promulgated by his disciples. They were so far below him! Even Paul, who perhaps understood him best, applied his principles in a very one-sided manner. Jesus would never have uttered such words as Paul's: "if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, Christ profits you nothing;" but whoever, with him, insisted on the "one thing needful" must sooner or later let the whole Law fall into abeyance. This was instinctively felt by Israel's leaders, and hence their persecution of Jesus.

The Jewish critics bring a serious charge against these moral and religious principles of Jesus. His doctrine, they say, is good for angels, but not for men. His demands are exaggerated. Not to injure one's enemy, but on the contrary to help him, is noble—and the Old Testament, too, enjoins it; but to *love* him is as impossible as it is for a man of spirit to turn the left cheek to one that smites him on the right. Every Jew whose words I have heard in conversation, or read in print, on this subject raises the same objection to the ethics of Jesus. On the other hand the Talmudic ethics are extolled as practical, human, and possible to carry out. I may refer once more to Deutsch as an example.\* "It has always been the unanimous opinion of both friends and foes that [the general character of the legislation of the Mishnah] is humane in the extreme: in spite of certain harsh and exceptional laws. . . . There is an almost modern liberality of view regarding the 'fulfilment of the Law' itself, expressed by such frequent adages as 'The Scripture says: "he shall live by them"—that means, he shall not *die through them*. They shall not be made pitfalls or burdens to him, that shall make him hate life.' 'He who carries out the precepts to the full is declared to be nothing less than a Saint.' 'The Law has been given to men, and not to angels.'"

The religious and moral precepts of the Talmud, then, are "humane," because they reckon not with the divine destiny of man, but with his actual weakness. This idea is

\* *Literary Remains*, p. 38.

nothing accidental. It is thoroughly characteristic of Talmudic Judaism. It is diametrically opposed to the Gospel of Jesus which finds in the command, "Be perfect as God is perfect" no random or hyperbolical utterance, but the one all-embracing demand with which the promise of unspeakable joy is in fullest harmony.

So long as Judaism ranges itself against this—and it cannot do otherwise—hundreds of parallel passages from New Testament and Talmud can do nothing towards showing agreement between the two. The difference is one of principle.

The necessity under which Judaism lies, unless it should renounce itself, of rejecting this exalted conception of man's calling, stands in close connection with the legal character of the rabbinical ethics.

We need not enter upon the historical questions as to when and how the Jewish legalism arose. It is enough to indicate the unquestioned fact that from the middle of the fifth century before Christ downwards the watchword of the pious Jews was: "Conformity with the Law!" and that this cry became in ever-increasing measure the expression of the vital principle of Judaism.

If we would understand the moral and religious life of the Jews, we must above all things get at a clear conception of their faith in the unapproachable glories of the Law.

The Law, according to the rabbis, is from eternity. Thousands of generations before the creation it existed, not only in God's decree but objectively, and through it the world was made. God loves it as a daughter, and not only studies it three hours a day, deducing and promulgating fresh *halachas* from it, but even regulates his own life in accordance with it. Prayer and sacrifice give temporal life alone, but the study and observance of the Law give life eternal. It is the only road to blessedness. As he travels alone the believer must think of it, as he parts from his friends he must speak of it. No privation is too great to be faced to gain the means of studying the law, and it is

better to let one's children starve than to forsake the school.

The knowledge of the Law is of no avail without its observance. Let no man study Scripture and Mishna and yet be rebellious against his parents, his teachers, and God. And yet when, in Bar-cochba's time, the rabbis discussed, in dire straits, whether the knowledge or the observance of the Law was the weightier matter, they decided unanimously in favour of its knowledge. For many commands which could only be observed by an agricultural people were given at Sinai forty years before Israel entered Canaan. And at the judgment of God knowledge of the Law will be more richly rewarded than observance of the commandments. So, too, the study of the sacrificial system, when the Temple had long been in ruins, was defended not only because when the Messiah came it would be put into practice again, but also because the knowledge of the precepts was itself meritorious though it should lead to no practical result whatever.

The Law was studied before Moses. Shem and Eber had their schools. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob studied the Law diligently. When the Messiah has come it will be studied still, and even in the future life the Law will be taught, for it is eternal.

Such was the old Jewish conception of the Law. Of course one teacher went further than another on certain points, and there may have been some who rejected, or at least disliked, the tendency to "make God a Jew"; but, whatever qualifications we may make, it remains the fact that the idea just expressed reappears constantly, and in every variety of form, and that the all-surpassing glory of the Law is the central principle of the scribes.

The "Law" which is thus glorified included the Pentateuch in the first place, but also the thousands of regulations contained in the "oral tradition." With regard to this latter there was some difference of opinion; for certain scribes said that it was only given direct by God to Moses in the sense of being implied in the written Law. Others



(and Maimonides follows them) distinguished between *halachas* given to Moses by God, and other *halachas* deduced from the former and from the Scripture. Concerning these latter it was possible for various schools of scribes to dispute.

The common opinion, however, was that Moses had received from the mouth of God the whole system of interpretation and application. R. Simeon ben Lakish (Berachôth 5 a) said "What is the meaning of the text (Ex. xxiv. 12) 'Come up to me into the mountain, and I will give you the stone tables and the law and the commandments, which I have written, to teach them'? The meaning of this text is as follows: 'The stone tables' are the ten commandments, 'the law' is the Scripture (i.e. the Pentateuch), 'the commandments' are the Mishna, 'which I have commanded' the Prophets and Writings (i.e. all the Bible except the Pentateuch), 'to teach them' means the Gemara." Some teachers went so far as to declare that Mishna and Talmud, together with the *tosephta* and *haggada* were all written on the tables of stone!

It is true that many of the *halachas* were known to have proceeded from this or that rabbi of later times, and that they were sometimes voted upon and decided by a majority. How did this agree with their Mosaic origin? Well! they had been forgotten meanwhile. And the cause of this forgetfulness was a subject of rabbinical speculation and discussion. In the mourning for the death of Moses, three thousand *halachas* were forgotten, so that even Joshua could not remember them; and it was only in Othniel's court of judgment that they were restored.

But no speculations as to the origin and history of the *halachas* were allowed in the smallest degree to qualify their binding nature. More importance was practically assigned to the words of the scribes than to the words of scripture itself; and whoso transgressed the words of the rabbis was liable to the penalty of death.

This belief in the divine origin not only of the written

Law, but of all the regulations built upon it and indissolubly connected with it, naturally led to a reliance upon external authority, which was carried to incredible lengths. No scribe professed to know anything from his own reflection or independent study. The only difference between them was that while some would teach nothing that they had not heard in so many words from their teachers, the majority went so far as to draw fresh inferences, in accordance with fixed rules, from the traditional matter they had received. Hillel and the other great lights of Judaism teach us "to avoid doubt, and choose a master; and not trust our own insight, even till our death." Nor could anything be more un-Jewish than the contrast drawn by Jesus between what "you have heard that they of old times said," and what "I say unto you."

Closely connected with this is the Talmudic conception of guilt and merit. Just as the ideal conception of man's calling preached by Jesus shuts out the very possibility of account-keeping between God and man, so does the legal conception necessarily involve it. Everything a man does or leaves undone is registered with its appropriate punishment or reward; and even though we cannot always trace the cause of what befalls us, yet whenever we suffer we may ask "how have we deserved this?" and whenever good fortune is ours, we may boast "God has not overlooked our good deeds!" One of the favourite subjects of the *haggada* was the calculation of the way in which this "measure for measure" worked out; and when the result seemed to contradict the theory, recourse was had to the well-known expedients (not peculiar to the Jews!) of an appeal to man's short-sightedness, to the secrecy alike of sin and repentance, to the recompenses of a future life, to the forgiveness secured on the Great Day of Atonement, to the inherited merits of fathers, to the intercession of the holy ones, and so on.

On this field of speculation far greater freedom was allowed than in what touched the Law, and occasionally we meet with clever and witty sayings in the *haggadas* on

the subject. Thus at the beginning of *Koheleth rabba* we read: "A beast may be hung upon the hook by a single one of its own sinews. But if all these are cut, what ropes and cords we need to hang it with! So too did Solomon hang upon his own merits before he sinned, but afterwards on the merits of his fathers."

But however profound or childish their speculations might be, the rabbis always kept to the idea of "deserts." It is the central principle of the Talmudic conception of man's calling, and is diametrically opposed to that of Jesus. To almost all the sayings in the fifth chapter of Matthew parallels—more or less apposite or inapposite—have been produced from the Talmud, but for the closing words "Be ye therefore perfect as God," it appears as impossible to produce a parallel as it is for the story of the pharisee and the publican. And it is this "be perfect" that throws the clearest light on what goes before. Jesus shows the utmost confidence in human nature, and contents himself with setting the moral ideal in clear broad lines before his disciples; whereas the Talmud, with an entire lack of any such confidence, ties men up as closely as possible, leads them along a strictly fenced path, and never ceases to hold before their eyes the reward of every right and the punishment of every wrong step.

The moral result of this legalism is inevitable formality and service for a reward. It was in vain that Antigonus of Socho gave the noble precept, "Be not like servants who work for a reward," in vain that many another scribe adopted, and perhaps laid frequent stress upon it, when all the while the whole tendency of their system necessarily led to the very thing against which they uttered their warning. It was in vain for the scribes to insist from time to time that it was not the mechanical performance of outward acts, but heartfelt prayer, joyous observance of the precepts, and mercy, that pleased God, when their ceaseless insistency on strict observance of the legal ordinances rendered such exhortations futile and made formalism a necessity. It was in vain that a single rabbi here and there ventured to

declare that even heathens might inherit the life eternal, or that a righteous heathen was better in the eyes of God than a wicked Jew, when even his own teaching was perpetually quickening the Jew's consciousness that he was a member of the chosen people, and that "all Israel" in the first place "had a share in the life everlasting." We are not speaking of the intentions or dispositions of the Talmudists, but of the tendencies of their system; and when, in the expectation of a reward, a man strives above all things strictly to observe the external duties of religion it is inevitable that the moral duties should fall into the background.

It was considered a great blessing for Israel that the precepts of the Law were so innumerable; for—as we are told at the close of the treatise *Makkôth* of the Mishna, and elsewhere—"God multiplied law and commandments that he might multiply Israel's deserts in observing them." In *Mechilta* on Ex. xiii. 2 much may be found to the same purpose worked out in detail, and including the following story: Once the disciples of Rabbi Joshua (about 100 A.D.) at Jamnia had attended service, when he was not present himself. He asked them what Rabbi Eleazar ben Azaria had preached about, and (after politely saying "It will be nothing new to you") they answered that he had preached on Deuteronomy xxix. 10, where the little children are mentioned in the enumeration of the classes of the people who witnessed the revelation of the Lord. Hereupon the rabbi had asked what the children were doing there, since they could not understand anything of the matter, and had answered his own question by saying that they were mentioned because the grown-up people who brought them had been rewarded for so doing, which he had proved out of Isaiah xlii. R. Joshua was so delighted with this explanation that he exclaimed: "There is no recent word that excels that! I am now seventy years old, but I never understood this before. Blessed art thou, Father Abraham, that Eleazar ben Azaria is descended from thee. The generation is not orphaned in which he lives!" In *Pirke Abôth* we read "If you learn much of the Law then shall a great

reward be given you. Be assured that He who has laid the task upon you will also deal out your reward, though it may be not till the next life." Moreover the mere mechanical performance of a religious act, or even the doing it with an evil intention, would be rewarded. Balak made sacrifice to Israel's God by Balaam's direction, in hope of moving him to lay on the prophet's lips a curse upon Israel. Nevertheless he would be rewarded for having offered the sacrifices.

Hillel said, "What you would not have done to you, do not that to others. This is the essence of the Law. All the rest is only application;" but it is utterly impossible to regard the system of which Hillel himself was so zealous an expounder as simply giving expression to the devout or humane natural feelings. To observe the sabbath, for instance, might and may be a religious act in the true sense, the expression of a natural impulse of piety which has become associated by habit and education with the special consecration of one day in seven to thankful rest and joy. But to learn by heart the nine-and-thirty occupations which one must not engage in on the sabbath, to be able to define them all and understand how to guard against transgressing with respect to them at every point, to count the number of steps one has taken from the house door so as not to pass the limits of a sabbath journey; to cudgel one's brains over the question how one is to keep a lamp alight that seems as if it would go out, and yet not to strike fire—how can all this be the expression of the piety of the heart?

Many of the rabbis evidently saw at times how worthless, or rather how hurtful, this merely external religiousness really was. Some of them were truly devout men, whose zeal for the Law was guided by the purest intentions and motives. They hoped to preserve Israel from the pollutions of heathendom by fidelity to the legal precepts, and they fought against many a moral evil. But by doing this in the only way they knew of they were, as a matter of fact, leading their people on a false track.

And the same legalism which produces formalism and externality on the one side must of necessity produce

systematic evasion on the other. They are the twin births of one mother. In spite of the sternness with which they insisted on the observance of the Law the rabbis saw very well that in many cases it was either impossible or in the highest degree perilous to observe it; and in spite of all their heroic memories and impulses they were not a race of martyrs. Such formulæ as "a door must be left open," "that the world may exist," "for the sake of peace," appear again and again in connection with the ingenious methods of escaping inconvenient or unpractical commandments while still appearing to reverence them; and in the background there is always the renowned decision of the council of Lydda to fall back upon, in which it was determined by a majority of votes that a man might break the Law in all points save those of idolatry, incest and murder, in order to save his life, for the Scripture says that man must *live* by the Law—not die by it. Even idolatry might under certain circumstances be committed to escape death.

Short of this extreme necessity, however, and the frank transgression of the Law which it was held to sanction, we find that the scribes invented methods of escaping the laws for the periodical cancelling of debts, allowed the marriage laws to be shamelessly evaded, and systematised the mental reservation which enabled a man to take oaths which he never meant to keep.

Perhaps this last is the weakest point in the Talmudic morals. Space forbids me to go into detail as to the four classes of oaths which need not be kept; but worse than all is the principle of mental reservation which allowed a man to take an oath which would be understood as sacred in the highest degree, and as he did so to make a (mental) explanation to himself which rendered it nugatory. Thus a man might say "Let it be to me as *cherem*," which would be understood to mean "I vow not to use it any more than I would use what had been devoted by the ban to God!" But he might mean *cherem* to the priests, not *cherem* to God, and so he might use the thing in question without perjury. Or, since *cherem* means a "fish-net" as well as the "curse of

devotion," he might say "I only swore by a fish-net." Or a man might say "may I myself (*atsmi*) be *korbân* (a gift to God) if I do this," and since *atsmi* may also mean "my bone," he might have put away a bone somewhere and meant that he would make *it* (not himself) *korbân*. If a man did such things as these he need not consult the scribes. If, however, he did consult them R. Meir said that he must be held to his oath; but the scribes decided that "a door must be opened for him," though he should be admonished not to take oaths lightly.

Quite in harmony with all this is the story told twice over of R. Jochanan. He once went to a woman (a heathen) to be cured of toothache. He saw her on Thursday and Friday. Then he said, What shall I do to-morrow? (for he had to preach). She said, You won't want it (*i.e.*, the remedy). He: But suppose I do want it? She: I will tell you the secret if you swear not to reveal it. Then he swore, "*Lalaha* of Israel, I will not reveal it." [This she could only understand to mean, "By the God of Israel I will not reveal it."] Then she told him the secret, and the next day he revealed it to the congregation. But (how could this be?) since he had sworn her an oath? He had sworn *lalaha* of Israel—*i.e.*, to the God of Israel I will not reveal it, but I will reveal it to the congregation of Israel. But was not this profaning the name of God? (Inasmuch as she would think that he had committed perjury). (No) for he told her at once. (*i.e.*, when he had got the receipt he told her that he had sworn *lalaha* not *balaha*, and the oath would not hold).

And besides formality and evasion the Talmudic system must foster a spirit of exclusiveness and national pride in the Jew, which only too easily degenerates into hatred of others.

Extreme expressions cited respectively in condemnation and defence of the Talmud may be found in the horrible utterance of R. Simeon ben Yochai: "The best of the heathens must be murdered" (to which *Mechilta* adds "as we break the head of the best of serpents,") and in R.



Jochanan ben Zakkai's declaration "as the sin-offering makes atonement for Israel, so does righteousness make atonement for the heathens." But on the one hand we must note that R. Simeon was notorious for his hatred of the Romans, and on the other that R. Jochanan was so well known for his gentle and yielding character that he was considered unfit to stand at the head of Judaism when the fall of Jerusalem rendered a strong hand more than ever needful. He was therefore succeeded by R. Gamaliel (the second)—the man who declared that all the good deeds of the heathen were done out of ostentation and were therefore worthy of the pains of hell.

But whatever sayings of individual rabbis may be produced it admits of not the smallest doubt that the ordinary doctrine of the scribes made a marked distinction between heathens and Jews and the duties that must be performed respectively to them.

The *Tannaim* had taught that heathens and shepherds (who had a very bad name) might not be thrown (into a pit) but must not be helped out of one. R. Joseph desired to qualify this by allowing the rescue of such a one for a reward and from fear of consequences. But R. Abayi thought that even in such a case the man appealed to must excuse himself by saying, for instance, "I must get my son down from the roof (or he will fall)," or "there is a summons against me, and I must hasten to the court." R. Ababu taught in the presence of R. Jochanan: One must not rescue heathens and shepherds from danger, nor throw them into it; but heretics, traitors, and apostates one must throw into danger and not rescue from it. R. Jochanan would except the apostates from this rule, on the strength of Deuteronomy xxii. 3,—on which a discussion follows as to who are included amongst the "apostates."—The teacher said: "One is to throw into danger, but not rescue." If one is to do the former how much more must one abstain from the latter? (so why should it be expressly added?). To this R. Joseph ben Channa in the name of R. Sheshet replied: The meaning can only be that if there is a ladder

in the well, one is to take it out, under pretext that the cattle will run into it. Rabba and R. Joseph both said: The only meaning is that if a stone lies at the mouth of the well one must cover it up with it and say: "I have to drive my cattle over it." Rabbina said: If there is a ladder in it one must take it away and say: "I have to get my son down from the roof."

Elsewhere it is expressly said that when the Scripture speaks of "your brother" and "your neighbour," this has no reference to a heathen fellow-countryman, so that one is not bound for example to pay a non-Jewish workman his wages before the sun sets, as the law enjoins in the case of an Israelite. If one finds anything one must return it to the owner—if he is a Jew, but not otherwise; and the rabbis seriously discuss the question what is to be done if one finds anything in a place in which there were more heathens than Jews when it was lost. The conclusion is that one may keep it. If a man finds a keg of wine in a city that is chiefly inhabited by heathens, then he need not have it cried but may keep it. But the finder may not drink any of it unless an Israelite proves to him that the wine is *kosher*.

The consistent application of these principles was qualified by two motives. Firstly by fear, or as the rabbis more mildly express it "for the sake of peace," and secondly by the shrinking from bringing God's name into dishonour amongst the heathen—a feeling which in other cases too led the rabbis to condemn an open transgression more severely than a secret one.

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I have tried to indicate, and as far as space permitted to illustrate the difference between the ethical principles of Jesus and the precepts of the Talmud. Have I not justified the assertion that a chasm gapes between them which nothing can bridge over? The Talmud only develops what is necessarily involved in the principle of legalism, and what is essentially opposed to the idealism of Jesus. We may choose between them but we cannot combine them.

There is a chasm between the gospel of Jesus and the Talmud; but are we to add: between Christians and Jews? By no means! Many Jews, thank God! are better than the Talmud would make them, and the Christians, alas! are not only far worse than they ought to be if they lived out the principles of Jesus, but are incapable of doing full homage to those principles even in theory.

The very attempts which are so frequently made by cultivated Jews to show that the teaching of the Talmud is essentially catholic and ethical, prove that they themselves are no longer satisfied with what is narrow and ceremonial; and on the other hand it would be only too easy to illustrate from the history of the Christian Church, and the things which are going on at this very moment in so-called Christian countries, every form of obliquity, of formalism and of national and religious hatred. We are no more able to hold the Jews responsible for all that stands in the Talmud than we are to point to the Christians as living witnesses of the glory of the gospel of Jesus.

But if I have truly sketched the character and spirit of the Talmud, the question remains to be answered: "By what secret does it retain its hold upon men who have really risen above the level of its ethical principles?"

The answer is not hard to find.

The result has shown that the Talmud is eminently qualified to perform the colossal work of holding the Jews together. The tendencies of which it is at once the fruit and the evidence possess a prodigious *church-making* power. It defines exactly what the believers are to do; and a distinct programme is the first necessity for the formation of a compact body. This programme must not require too much, and it must make it clear to the multitude exactly what it does require. The Talmud has done this. One need not be an exceptionally good man to be a Jew according to the Talmud. And again, if one wishes to do something more than others, the Talmud shows how it can be done without insisting on a real regeneration. Be a scribe, and

you are a prince in Israel! If you can be a moral hero as well, so much the better; but in any case your knowledge of the Law in itself exalts you very high.—Just so! That is how to make a compact community, a church. Rome trod the same path, and secured the same success. More than one Protestant communion has attempted it, but by the side of Judaism and Romanism they cut but a sorry figure. Nay even Rome has never understood the art as the heroes of the Talmud did.

But the less any community understands of this art the better. For it can only be practised at the expense of morality of the truest and noblest stamp. It keeps alive the spirit of narrowness, intolerance, slavery to the letter, and formalism; it cherishes mediocrity, and hampers the man whose soul soars upward.

Compared to the churchmaking forces of Judaism and Christianity, Jesus is a mere cypher. He could not even get together for a single hour a handful of followers formed after his principles.

But something very different from this he both purposed and accomplished in proclaiming war on the spirit of exclusiveness, and so breaking in, ever anew, upon the peace of the "Churches." He casts the purifying fire amongst men. His image, his words, his spirit, handed on by tradition from generation to generation, and the principles to which the noblest heart of humanity so fully responds, leave mankind no rest. The less we draw the sinews of the Gospel, the more we leave it free to work its way, the less outward unity will there be, the mightier will the protest be against any attempt to chain the thoughts, the feelings or the aspirations, but the bolder will be the development of every good disposition, the deeper will be the sense of personal responsibility, the richer the blessing that will rest on the work undertaken for mankind.

The Gospel makes no Churches, but it makes men.

*Leiden.*

H. OORT.

MR. BEARD'S LECTURES ON THE  
REFORMATION.\*

THE history of the Reformation in Europe has not been, and perhaps never will be, satisfactorily written. Much good and valuable work has been done in clearing up the course of the movement in special countries and at special periods: but the very bulk of the materials accumulated repels the inquirer, and their quality is even more formidable than their quantity. An unbiassed authority is the rare exception; and the prejudices of the immediate actors and narrators of the past events have in great measure descended to the writers and readers of history at the present time. All students know how apt an historian is, even in matters which possess only an antiquarian interest, to form a theory, and warp the facts to fit into its framework. But in this case there is hope that some particularly stubborn truth will resist distortion, and compel a reversal of opinion. After all, the writer's chief aim is to get at the real facts, and he may give up his theories without any loss of character or credit, without any important change in mental attitude. With the study of the Reformation history it is not so. An inquirer with any well-defined

\* *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge.* The Hibbert Lectures, 1883. By the Rev. CHARLES BEARD, B.A.

A brief notice and analysis of these Lectures having already appeared, in the *Modern Review* for last July, I have not tried to follow the order of the Course, but have discussed in an unavoidably desultory manner such points as especially struck me. As I have abstained from a connected review of the work, I take this opportunity of expressing my sense of its high historical merit, and even higher suggestiveness. It is seldom that so scrupulous a fairness is joined with so firm a grasp of the intricate details of the most difficult period in history.

religious belief must needs approach his subject with a preconceived notion of what he will find in it; and the worst is, that he will be sure to find many plausible authorities to support almost any view he may chance to hold. And a change in the fundamental view of the historian or student would almost necessarily involve a change in religious belief, with all the consequences implied in this.

These disadvantages are inevitable; but they may be partially obviated by other means. Greater care in collecting and weighing authorities will do much; a habit of keeping fact rigidly separate from inference in thought and statement, will do more; but the main requisites for a history that shall be both just and convincing are two—the first, a wide and charitable sympathy, a temper that seeks rather to understand than to approve or condemn; and the second is akin to it—the dramatic instinct of the poet or novelist. The former faculty makes the narrative just; the latter makes it a record of possible human actions.

There are not a few writers of what is regarded as history or biography who do not seem ever to have formed a connected and consistent idea of the men and women whose actions they record—nay, they do not even seem to realize that any such notion is required. To take the instance that lies nearest to hand, there are worthy, learned and ingenious persons who devote their time to proving, in newspapers, magazines, and books, the complete innocence of Mary Queen of Scots. They point out with care the weak points in the accusations, the compatibility of this or that suspicious circumstance with the guiltlessness of the Queen, the probable or possible way in which the blame might have been unjustly cast on her by slanderous rumours or artifices—and do not see that when they have done, the woman whose personality impressed itself so strongly on all whom it touched is left without any character or individuality at all, an innocent nonentity, helplessly blown about by warring winds.

The number of those who allow their historical work and judgment to be not only touched, but seriously impaired

by prejudice and lack of appreciation and sympathy, is still greater. Those who have the power of seizing and depicting the individual character most clearly, are often unable to comprehend the views of those who opposed their favourite party, or to realize that any honest and sensible man could sincerely hold such views. Especially is this the case in histories of the Reformation, and, above all, of the Reformation in England. For the complex compromise in which that change ended lends itself peculiarly well to almost any kind of distortion. Every writer on this subject has a thesis to prove, which occupies all his attention—the complete continuity of doctrine in the Church, the wise and virtuous nature of Henry VIII., the reforming zeal of Wolsey, or something equally probable. For instance, one of the latest writers of the High Church school cannot account for the strong and often coarse language used by the ultra-Reformers and Puritans against the Mass and the Altar, by anything less than the prevalence of an “epidemic monomania” of hatred against “the blessed Eucharist.” It would be difficult for an author more plainly to write himself down as incapable of serious historical work; such a helpless apology for an explanation amounts to a confession of inability to see more than one side of a question.

It was with a fresh experience of the defects of many historians of the English Reformation—defects which had strongly coloured their views of the Continental religious movements—that I came to read the Hibbert Lectures for the present year. Though Mr. Beard's treatment of his great subject is not only or chiefly historical, I felt that on the soundness of his historical judgments would rest the credit of his inferences from the past to the present and future; and that his account of the English Reformation, though not an essential part of his work, would form the truest test as to his fairness and sympathetic appreciation in the discussion of those phases of the movement with which Englishmen are less acquainted. And in this expectation I was not disappointed; though the sketch of the English Reformation is a sort of backwater in the stream



of the Lectures, it still gives sufficient evidence of the spirit that animates the whole. The unbiassed fairness and wide sympathy displayed in this Lecture are signs of the value of those parts that cannot so easily be tested.

Mr. Beard, like the best of modern historians, wishes to study events as the marks of a general development of human thought, and to grasp the *differentia*, the central characteristic of each period. Details to him are chiefly valuable as helping to make up the complete picture; and viewing the English Reformation thus fully, he pronounces on it an opinion that helps to explain the facts as no lay or clerical dogmatist's theory can, and yet recognises what of truth there is in each special interpretation.

In brief, the elements of the situation in England before the Reformation may be summed up as follows: a king arbitrary, violent and rapacious, but desirous of popularity, a Church dissatisfied with itself and making half-hearted attempts to reform itself, and a nation discontented with its condition, and leavened with old traditions of resistance to Rome and the clergy, and old social and religious grievances. The first change of the Reformation came from the sovereign; it was forced on the nation from above, before the doctrinal revolt had gained strength among the people. Hence, this first part of the movement involved little shifting of dogma. The English murmured at Henry VIII's changes and confiscations, but acquiesced in them, largely from a feeling that the royal power was the one firm and stable thing left, and that its overthrow would be fatal.

In the next reign the doctrinal change was imposed on the people by men whose theology was drawn from abroad, and represented a far more advanced state of thought than generally existed in England. Indeed, till the persecutions of Mary's reign, there is little trace of the new doctrines largely influencing the masses.

Having been begun by the rulers, the movement was checked by them also. Change had been forced on the people before they were ready for it; when they were desirous of further change, it was forbidden. The pace

which had been too fast for the old generation, was too slow for the new, and the same policy that had stirred up the Pilgrimage of Grace in the sixteenth century, aroused the Puritan revolt in the seventeenth. Party compilers may refer the latter to a "monomania," or to the evil fruits of the anarchical speculations of Continental Protestantism; but to the unbiassed mind, the most natural explanation would seem to be that the rulers of Church and State, having started before the nation was ready to follow, now halted before the nation was prepared to stop.

Such substantially is Mr. Beard's view of the English Reformation, as indicated in his brief summary of its progress. The non-popular character of the change up to the reign of Elizabeth prevented England from having any great heroes of religion, any of those noble enthusiasms which arise among the people; but it saved the country from a religious war, such as desolated France, the Netherlands and Germany. When religious dogmatism and the polemical spirit reached the masses, all classes had been already in a considerable degree, if not Protestantized, at least modernized by the action of the government. Political and religious troubles had to be combined to beget a civil war; and even this was carried on in a manner which, at its harshest, was mildness itself compared with the methods of a Guise, an Alva or a Tilly. If Archbishop Laud became one of the best-hated men in all England—a fact somewhat slurred over by those who have accorded him a sort of informal canonization—it was hardly so much because of his religious views, as of the petty and tyrannical meddlesomeness of his ecclesiastical courts—a form of supervision intolerable to the full-grown intellect. Among the bulk of the nation the wish not to be interfered with was probably stronger than any religious views; and as they had helped the Puritans to overthrow the Church, they afterwards helped the restored Church to put down the Puritans.

In pointing out the political influences which moulded the English Church, the continuity of its development, and

the composite character of its doctrine and ritual from the first, Mr. Beard has shown that he can appreciate the views of ecclesiastical partisans without agreeing with them. To some of his statements it would be possible to take exception, as when he classes the "Ten Articles," the "Institution of a Christian Man," and the "Six Articles," as all asserting the same uncompromising Catholicism. The "Ten Articles," and the "Institution" as expounding them, surely show a strong tendency to refine away the cruder Roman forms of certain doctrines so as to make them more spiritual and Scriptural; while the "Six Articles," though probably intended "*quoad terrorem populi*," to frighten rather than hurt the Protestants, are distinctly reactionary in tone, and even in substance.

But such matters of detail are comparatively unimportant. The main point to notice and commend is the fair and judicious way in which the Lecturer points out how the ritual and dogma of the Church alike bear traces of compromise between Protestant and Catholic, and how, consequently, neither of the parties now representing these divisions can claim exclusive supremacy with the support of history. The High Church party has seemed to profit most by recent investigations—partly, no doubt, because its historians have been first in the new pastures of State papers; but there is a sufficient historical ancestry left for the Low Church also.

The wide sympathy which I have attributed to Mr. Beard is a large claim to make for any one in matters theological. Therefore, although this digression on the English Reformation has already extended to too great a length, I must quote one or two passages in which questions debated even to this day are treated by him. It is a pleasure to transcribe such fair, clear and moderate statements, after seeing the distorted versions of sectarian history which are weekly furnished to those receptacles of bad taste, bad temper and bad English—the "religious" newspapers.

At the same time, we must take some pains to understand a fact which more than any other differentiates the English Refor-

mation—I mean the continuity of the Anglican Church. There is no point at which it can be said, Here the old Church ends, here the new begins. Are you inclined to take the Act of Supremacy as such a point? I have already shown that Henry's assumption of headship was but the last decisive act of a struggle which had been going on for almost five centuries. The retention of the Episcopate by the English Reformers at once helped to preserve this continuity, and marked it in the distinctest way. I speak here as an historian, not as a theologian, and I have nothing to do with that doctrine of apostolical succession which many Churchmen hold, though the Articles do not teach, and the Prayer-book only implies it. But it is an obvious historical fact that Parker was the successor of Augustine, just as clearly as Lanfranc and Becket. Warham, Cranmer, Pole, Parker—there is no break in the line, though the first and third are claimed as Catholic, the second and fourth as Protestant. The succession, from the spiritual point of view, was most carefully provided for when Parker was consecrated: not even the most ignorant controversialist now believes in the Nag's-Head fable. The canons of the pre-Reformation Church, the statutes of the Plantagenets, are binding upon the Church of England to-day, except where they have been formally repealed. There has been no break, unless by what we may call private circumstances, in the devolution of Church property. The Church may be Protestant now, as it undoubtedly was Catholic once; but it is impossible to fix the point at which the transition was legally and publicly made. (Pp. 311, 2.)

These lines might have been written by an Anglican; but Mr. Beard's estimate of the Puritans is no less fair, no less generous and sympathetic, as the following extract will show:—

I am not concerned to vindicate either the character or the aims of Puritanism; it is sufficient to have affiliated it on the true stock of the Reformation. Now, after two centuries and a half, historical students whose judgment is not disturbed by the fascination of old controversies in new forms, are beginning to discern that the roots of all that is noble in English life to-day go down to Roundhead and Cavalier alike, and that piety and learning were not the monopoly of either Churchman or Puritan. Let George Herbert the Anglican, Colonel Hutchinson the Independent, Lord Falkland the Latitudinarian, stand side by side

as the best that that troubled time could produce, and let each of us leave it to the force of natural attraction to adjust the order of their precedence. One word only I would say as to the charge of pettiness in controversy often brought against the Puritan party. What they perpetually asked from Elizabeth and her Bishops, what they begged of James I. at the Hampton Court Conference, what they urged upon the triumphant Church of the Restoration, touched the same points: the kneeling posture at the Lord's Supper, the sign of the cross in baptism, the use of the surplice, the bowing at the name of Jesus, the reading of Apocryphal lessons. All external things, it will be said; things indifferent to a man of robust conscience who can look below the surface into the essence of controversies; certainly not matters upon which to divide a Church and rend a nation in twain. Nor am I prepared to deny that in the course of the hundred years during which these ceremonies were in dispute, they assumed the nature of shibboleths, became standards of bitter contention rather than matters of reasonable debate, and were eagerly defended or assailed by many who had no real conception of their significance. But a glance at the list which I have given sufficiently shows that these ceremonies had to the Puritan a very definite symbolic meaning. They stood for the old Church, for its authority over Scripture, for its doctrine of the Real Presence, for its theory of priests and sacraments. Looked at in this light, the external conformity which was asked of the Puritans involved a transition from the Protestant to the Catholic side of the Reformation. It meant the substitution of the authority of the Church for the authority of Scripture and Conscience. (Pp. 322, 3.)

And the Broad Church also receive their historical ancestry in those who forbore to lay stress either on the mediævalism of the ritual or the Lutheranism of the Articles, and contented themselves with practically following out the ethical parts of religion, either neglecting dogma or giving it a wide and elastic meaning. In other passages, too long for me to quote as I should wish to do, the good and ill effects of Dissent on the sects themselves and on the Established Church are weighed with the same even hand.

The same wish to comprehend and explain rather than judge is evident in Mr. Beard's treatment of the Conti-

mental Reformation—the most important part of the historical section of his Lectures. In this, too, the dramatic faculty comes in to help. The Revival of Learning in the North, the doctrinal Reformations of Germany, Switzerland, and France, the sects and systems of the many new religious bodies, all tend to group themselves round a number of great, or at least influential men. The records of the changes on the Continent falls naturally into the biographical form; Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin, sum up in their own lives the movements they led. Mingled as the Reformation was with the home policy of the states in which it arose, saved as it often was from overwhelming attacks by their foreign policy, it was primarily the result of the action and reaction between the popular thought and the minds of great men. In spite, therefore, of the wide subjects of the separate Lectures—with which readers of the *Modern Review* will be sufficiently familiar from the brief notice in the last number—several of them resolve themselves into sketches of personal character and work.

Especially valuable is the explanation of Luther's mental conflicts, contained in the Fifth Lecture. In the wide and very human nature of the great Reformer, two opposing tendencies may be traced. There is the sound strong common-sense which had swept away many ecclesiastical figments and mediæval superstitions; but there is also a passionate desire for a sure belief, a dread of the threatening religious anarchy, which tends to return to old doctrines and distrust reason and criticism. Mr. Beard skilfully traces the apparent contradictions of theory and practice into which Luther was drawn by these opposing tendencies as each got the mastery in turn. Wavering from the critical rationalism towards which Erasmus had cautiously begun to advance, to a more than mediæval faith in dubious dogmas, he at last entrenched himself behind the plenary inspiration of Scripture as a last citadel of authority, and cast out as a deadly enemy the reason which had helped to lead him to his present position, and

now threatened to draw him further. In the Lecturer's opinion, the Satanic visitations of Luther (the apparently physical manifestations of which, after all, were few, and such as have come to many overwrought brains) were in general merely the "mythological" form in which he clothed the assaults of his own practical reason on the weak points of his dogmatic faith. For he had himself seen and clearly stated the obvious discrepancies between different books of the Old and New Testament; his dislike of the book of Esther and the Epistle of James was expressed in terms too familiar to need quotation. He could feel, in certain moods, that his doctrine of Consubstantiation was, if anything, harder either to understand or to believe than the Trentine dogma of Transubstantiation.\* In this conflict of the mind there is nothing unfamiliar to us; most men's religion is a compromise between the critical temper that questions all, and the craving for a sure and strong faith. But in many cases either the reason acquiesces in its exclusion from the precincts of faith, and cultivates its own field without daring to look over the wall of the sacred enclosure, or else freely ranges over the whole space, undeterred by the presence of some scarecrow dressed in the cast-off clothes of belief. With Luther belief had got the upper hand, but reason was too strong to be "strangled" and constantly returned in a diabolical character, not to be finally slain by physical or spiritual weapons. Even the famous stain on the wall of his chamber may be made the text of an allegory; it has unfortunately been in all ages the way of dogmatic theologians to treat reason as a demon and try to exorcise it by throwing a little ink at it.

The whole treatment of Luther, in its sympathetic insight, is the most attractive part of the Lectures. The great Saxon Doctor had perhaps the most thoroughly human nature, in strength and weakness, of all the eminent men of that time. In almost all the other Reformers there is some barrier to shut us off from full comprehension of

\* Though the Lutheran theory seems to me to have the advantage of not involving an unscientific hypothesis as to the nature of matter.



their characters and full sympathy with their thought. Erasmus never throws off entirely the timidity and isolation of the scholar. Melancthon's timorous and yielding coldness of nature is not true mildness. Calvin seems to work with the remorselessness of a theological machine. Zwingli's common sense is tinged with the *bourgeois* spirit. In most of these men, too, there is a sort of detachment from the common joys and relationships of human life, which seems a survival from the monastic spirit of mediæval churchmen. If Calvin had lived some five centuries earlier, he might have been Hildebrand; one can never figure Martin Luther as an inquisitor or an ecclesiastical autocrat. Doubtless, as the Lecturer admits, the Reformer's views on "Wein, Weib und Gesang" were tinged with the coarseness of his age; but even the inevitable touch of the animal was natural and healthy, and as alien from the curious foulness of the monastic imagination as from the vicious prudery of modern conventionalism.

Too many of the Reformers seem to have taken wives rather as a convenience or a protest against the system of celibacy than because of a true love or even fellow-feeling. They remained bachelors at heart while substituting the wife for the housekeeper. Most of them had a sort of academic contempt and neglect of women, and an ignorant scorn of the whole female sex, for which their successors paid dearly during the Romanist reaction of the Counter-Reformation. While the later Lutherans and Calvinists were grinding out libraries of now unreadable theology for the men, the Jesuits had been providing religion for the women.

The intelligent and hearty following out of Luther's own example, would surely have enabled the Reformation to spread further, and take more hold on the hearts of men; it would have substituted a little love for a great deal of logic, and might even have saved many communities from vacillating between a Catholicism that stultifies the intellect and a Protestantism that ossifies the affections. It is one

of Luther's highest merits that he rescued marriage from the ascetic theories that had desecrated it into a sacrament, and had made a wife a concession to man's weakness—a sort of exorcised concubine—and he at least did not reduce her again to the state of a wageless servant. The genial household of Doctor Martin and his Kate must have been a green oasis in the desert of dogma and polemic; even now it is one of the pleasantest things to read about in the history of the times. That marriage by which Luther set the seal upon his revolt from the old system, his most unpardonable sin in the eyes of his enemies, was perhaps the most thoroughly useful and true act in his career. The rebellion against a corrupt Church, the attack on superstition and vice, the return to the plain language of Scripture, were no new things, as is abundantly shown in the lecture on "Reform before the Reformation;" the Pauline or Augustinian scheme of theology, though developed independently by Luther, was not new either; but the enduring force of his action lay in the fact that he threw down the cloister wall to return to Nature, just as he pushed aside the priest and the crucifix to reach Christ. His followers failed to repeat his success largely because they built up the gaps he had made with new barriers of intellectual formalism and scholastic theology.

The immediate effect of the Reformation on morals is touched on by Mr. Beard in a short note which gives the result of long reading. He sums up in the following manner:—

I am afraid that we must admit that, whatever its after effects (and certainly no grave moral charges can be justly made against English and Scottish Puritanism), the Reformation did not at first carry with it much cleansing force of moral enthusiasm. The question is only indirectly connected with my main subject; but it will require much more careful treatment at the hands of any future historian of the Reformation than it has yet received. (P. 146.)

This is wisely said; but though historians of Protestant views should sift all evidence on either side carefully before

pronouncing judgment, they need not be afraid if the sentence seems to go against them. An interregnum is always a period of disorder and confusion; and it must have been some time before the new influences of the Reformation replaced the restraints of the mediæval system which had broken down. That European morals seemed, for the time, to deteriorate, is not to be wondered at; for the revolt against religious forms was sure to destroy those conventional decencies and customs by which all are greatly, and many exclusively controlled. But if we treat the Reformation in the large historical manner which Mr. Beard employs (pp. 2, 3)—regarding it as the work of the spirit of the Renaissance applied to religion—we may find reason to be thankful that this mighty destructive and constructive force was applied first to theology in the North, and not, as in Italy, to art and literature. The wildest crimes of the maddest Anabaptists were better than the cold atrocities of cultivated wickedness in the South.

The spirit of dogmatism still survived, and a new scholasticism of Melancthon and Calvin, and their disciples, replaced the old. But the capital advantage of the Reformation to modern thought and science was that the new chains could never be riveted like the old; the new rulers of theology had to start with far less power to repress revolt than had been possessed by those whom they overthrew. All such efforts—natural as they might be—as Reformed churches could make to accumulate tradition and enforce authority, were certain to be rather hurtful than helpful to them. Those whom they sought to retain by giving them their accustomed infant-food of authoritative statements, were sooner or later drawn into the organisation where they could have these advantages in greatest perfection. The Romanist's stereotyped question, "Where was your religion before Luther?" is hardly put correctly. Though there is no heathen Greek or Roman to ask him where *his* religion was before—Peter, to concede the maximum—yet the Buddhist, and even more, the member of the

Greek Church, could retort with some very awkward questions. What the question really means is, "Where was the authority of your Church before the Reformation?" for *religion* as such needs only truth, not antiquity, and is generally best at its source. It is in this latter form that the inquiry is so damaging to a certain class of minds; only the Church of England, among all the Reformed bodies, can make any plausible answer, and even this response is sometimes inadequate to satisfy the anxious.

It seems, indeed, perfectly natural that members of the extremely "High" party should periodically join the Roman Church. There are persons who have inherited or acquired a taste for authority, tradition, dogma, and ceremony, and require larger and larger doses to satisfy them. The habit of confession, as a sort of spiritual sedative, grows on the penitent like the custom of taking chloral. Soon the increased appetite will have consumed all the stores of the English Church, kept down as they are by the encroachments of the State and the nibblings of "aggrieved parishioners," and any one who craves for more must go to the only place where he can find it. The wonder is that those who nourish the taste for tradition do not see whither it will lead.

The English Church indeed has this quality, that under its external unity it can make room for very different schools of thought. The scientist, humanitarian, or socialist can find a place in the Broad Church, the middle-class Protestants *par excellence* in the Low, and lovers of the past in the various stages of the High, according to the fervour of their love. This is in some ways an advantage; but it may be doubted whether it is destined to prove an unmixed good. A Church so constituted may represent the nation, much as the army of Xerxes represented the Persian empire, and may prove almost as helpless against a small band of resolute and disciplined assailants of its ecclesiastical status or its standards of belief. The movement in favour of comprehension, so often begun, so often failing, in order to be finally successful, must be preceded by a general agreement

to yield on minor points of dispute, and a general conviction of the smallness of small things—which latter is unfortunately slow in penetrating the average theological mind, to whose microscope no doctrinal point is small.

Macaulay has asserted that the essence of the Revolution of 1688 lay in the fact that it broke the line of succession in the monarchy; it may be thought that the essence of the Continental Reformation lay in its breaking the line of spiritual and ecclesiastical succession. Lutheranism and Calvinism for some time stood to Roman Catholicism in the relation of William III. to James II. This was by no means an unmixed advantage; for the temper of the age was intolerant, and the new churches were often in the unpleasant position of displaying pretensions little less than those of their older rival, while lacking the necessary force and authority to make these claims good. It may even be thought by some that the victory of science, criticism, and philosophy over dogmatic theology has been too speedy in Germany, for instance, and that the weakness of the Reformed Churches apart from the State has hindered the equable development of thought.

But, as I have already stated, this inevitable break in tradition, slightest in England, but noticeable even there to all but those determined not to see, was what settled the course of modern thought in the northern nations. The Schoolmen of the reformed theology, whose rise is clearly sketched in Mr. Beard's Eighth Lecture, might build up fresh Babels of logical systems, using even the bricks of the old edifices which Luther and Zwingli had broken down; but the "confusion of tongues" of countless warring sects soon showed that these new towers would never reach the heaven, nor even equal the height attained by their predecessors. None of the Protestant churches could recall a time when they had ruled undisturbed with no precarious sovereignty; there were always dissidents who could neither be finally confuted nor completely suppressed. The idea of the true functions of a Church has changed greatly, and seems destined to change even more. The old idea was a

sort of reduction to literal fact of the parable of sheep and shepherd. It was the office of the priesthood to lead out the laity as sheep, to feed and tend them, and the duty of the laity to follow—still like sheep—without questioning or misgiving. The tides of men were to be ruled wholly by the attraction of the two worlds of light, the Church and the State.

The notions of government, civil and ecclesiastical, are now much altered. Though theorists, in angry recoil from the faults of modern systems, call for the benevolent despotism of a heaven-born ruler, the general set of opinion is unmistakably towards the higher democratic theory, according to which the State has two functions—to govern the people, and to teach them to govern themselves. And as it is in politics, so in religion; the Church is to rely, not on the blind faith and unreasoning submission of ignorant multitudes, but on the intelligence of those who know what they believe, and why; and whose creed, if it deals with matters above their comprehension, does not outrage either their sense of justice or their reason.

The rise of the critical spirit and the development of science and philosophy (to each of which Mr. Beard has devoted a lecture) have had a considerable share in bringing about this state of opinion; but they have done so rather indirectly than directly. On the masses of men, even science has as yet made comparatively little impression; the higher criticism does not speak to them. It is rather the change in the moral atmosphere, as I may call it, that has brought about the more important alterations. A dogma that palpably contradicts the common sense or wounds the moral consciousness of the society on which it is forced, must eventually fall; and the church that upholds it will be endangered by such ill-timed support. Even the Canaanites whom Joshua slaughtered have found means, long after their death, to inflict a deadly wound upon much Hebraistic theology. In order to justify the divine commands for such deeds, Mansel started, or revived, the notion of the fundamental difference between divine and

human morality, and the incomprehensibility of the former except through revelation ; and this theory led on to Agnosticism by an obvious inference. The historical method of the higher criticism was a real refuge from such opposition between dogma and morality.

It is this shifting of public opinion that really brings about considerable changes in religious belief ; criticism, though it ceases destroying and begins to construct, can never command general assent by its purely intellectual means. Hence the position *credo quia impossibile*, may remain for a long time unassailed, for "impossible" is not a scientific word, and Science is more concerned with doing than with determining what cannot be done ; but *credo quia absurdum* is surely doomed. Of course all religious beliefs whatever can, by the expenditure of a little cheap ingenuity, be put in a ridiculous light ; but this is a far different case from that of those doctrines which ascribe to God conduct which would generally be regarded as unjust or trivial in a man. It is difficult, for instance, to suppose that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration will long continue to be generally held—that "forged bond with a forged release indorsed on the back of it," according to which a child is freed by a rite of which it knows nothing from the guilt of acts which it has not committed.

It is this change in what I have termed the moral and mental atmosphere that determines the course of reform. Feelings are more important than events, even in politics. The governments of the Holy Alliance, we know, were far more rigid and despotic, and apparently far stronger, than those that had preceded them, before the French Revolution ; the difference lay in the minds of their subjects, over whom the breath of liberty had once passed. Again, it was the remembrance of the Great Rebellion in English history that made the Revolution of 1688, if not possible, at least easy of accomplishment. The worth of an unsuccessful or incomplete revolt lies in the fact that it makes men realise the possibility of its full success.

So, too, with the Reformation ; it did not always bring



about much advance in doctrine. Its leaders kept much that they should have rejected, rejected not a little that could well have been kept. Even the poor misguided Anabaptists, who served as the scapegoat of the Reformation, had some notions higher and truer than those of Luther or Calvin. The extreme Calvinistic dogma of predestination and reprobation leads more logically to antinomianism than that extreme and sordid form of the doctrine of Indulgences against which Luther first rose up. If sin cannot alter a destiny fixed from before the foundation of the world, a man may feel even freer to sin than if he could escape the consequences of his wrong-doing by a mere money-payment. Even Luther, the most large-hearted of the Reformers, though he sometimes claimed liberty of conscience for all, was inconsistent in withholding it from others; while Melancthon and Zwingli had no scruple in repressing heresy, and whatever the share which Calvin personally had in the death of Servetus, there can be no reasonable doubt that he would have had fifty Servetuses burnt, could he have laid hands on them.

All these greater or lesser failings are assiduously gathered up and exaggerated by a certain class of writers and thinkers, who wish to represent the Reformation as a senseless, or at least over-violent and unnecessary revolt from a venerable and sacred constitution of society. With a method, which, though it has recently been proclaimed as a new and scientific discovery by (I think) Mr. Mallock, has been practised from time immemorial by all who, for party purposes, seek to degrade history to the level of society journalism, they refute the Reformers, and prove the wickedness of their followers by unsavoury little bits of court and other scandal about Philip of Hesse and his two wives, or Henry VIII. and Mary and Anne Boleyn; and Protestant writers are apt, in the same petty spirit, to retort with Popes Alexander VI. and Leo X., with Philip II. and Mary Queen of Scots. It is time that this useless bandying of old taunts should cease. Since it is well that the details of our narratives should be correct, let them be

settled dispassionately, according to admitted rules of evidence, and left once for all. All the wrangling that has ever been, or can ever be, expended on these questions will never help us one step forward towards the true comprehension of the Reformation.

The tendency of narrow minds to attribute vast results to small and petty causes, has been most banefully evident in the treatment of Sixteenth Century history. What we must recognise, if we are to understand anything of the relation between past and present, is that with the Renaissance and the Reformation began a really great change; as M. Taine vividly puts it, "men opened their eyes and *saw*." Men began in many ways to think and act for themselves, not as members of some great institution, but as individuals. There had been attempts at reform before the Reformation, attempts to raise the standard of culture before the Revival of Letters; but the compelling power of some vast organisation, often feudalism, too often the Church, had doomed them to failure. It was by an irony of fate that the Italian Popes of the Renaissance seemed to bring about the overthrow of their own supreme spiritual dominion. Their good, as well as their bad characteristics, helped to undermine their power. Some of them actively encouraged, and most of them permitted, not only the ardent study of the classics, and of the original language of the Scriptures also, but even a sort of intellectual scepticism and freedom of thought on religious matters which surprise us on the threshold of the age of intolerance, and at the end of the age when toleration was not so much as thought of.

Italy soon lost her pre-eminence of learning; but from her lamp was kindled the more enduring light of the Northern lands. A series of great discoveries, coming near together, had widened the material, and with it the mental world; the press stood ready to spread among the people the new thoughts that were sure to arise. Some great change was inevitable; and the keynote to all the changes that happened is the new sense of the importance of the

individual. Architecture, formerly carried on by some patient company of unknown fellow-workers, fell under the power of some single great man, from whose brain all proceeded, and soon fell into imitation of classical work, while painting, the most personal of the arts, replaced it. The Universities showed little new life, and indeed generally lagged behind the advance of learning; but scholars arose, who were universities in themselves. Everywhere men, great by genius or position, spring up, and the events of history group themselves round their lives. All the Reformers agree in this, that to them Religion is a relation of each single soul to God. It was this rejection of intermediaries that made reconciliation hopeless between the old church and the new sects. All else might have been forgiven, but not this.

It was in vain that the clergy and theologians of the Reformation tried to take away with one hand what they had given with the other, and to substitute for the *dicta* of an infallible church a system drawn from their own interpretation of Scripture. All the arguments by which their independence had been vindicated against Rome could be brought forward to vindicate the freedom of others from their rule. For the Reformation so called in history was only one important stage in the progress of one phase of a mighty change; the force of the main movement has gone on without ceasing, and is still carrying us forward whether we will or no. The old instinct of authority and systematizing for a time stiffened religious thought into elaborate and rigid creeds, and enabled the Roman Church to rise again by its own renewed vigour and the faults of its rivals. But even the Roman Church was changed in spirit by the movement which it condemned.

From religion men turned to science, to literature, to philosophy. Whether they brought their new and wider knowledge to bear on theology or not, they contributed by every discovery, every masterpiece, to change the conditions under which faith must henceforth live. Criticism took up the records of the past, and with one touch revealed the

literary character and ancestry of old records, showing the mythical character of what had been thought history, and the historical value of what had been neglected as myth. Archæology, the critical and the historical methods have explored together the obscure annals of the past; and our view has widened and cleared backwards as well as around us.

Of all this the average man knows, or at least thinks little; the change is in his environment, and he does not remark it. He does not think as his forefathers did in regard to the material world, or the facts of history, simply because he has been taught differently. He retains the religious beliefs or unbeliefs of his ancestors as they have come down to him through the society to which he belongs; what has altered is the *way* in which he holds his creed. It is this which is specially characteristic of the state of modern thought; not so much disbelief as nebulous doubt, not so much hostility to faith as an inability to believe, often joined with a real desire to do so. Perhaps even that mildness of the age which is revolted by any attempt at religious persecution is partly the fruit of this instability of doctrine; hardly any one, infidel or Christian, is quite sure that he can follow out his belief to its logical outcome. Has not the educated body of religious men in this country practically, though tacitly, abandoned the crude doctrine of Eternal Punishment? Among the many clergy who preach it, how many do so with any real conviction of its truth? Who cares to expose himself to the inexorable *sortes* that drives him to state at what point of the infinite gradations of human character the "great gulf" should open?

Those who hold that in matters of religion men ought to think for themselves, and not confine the action of their independent thought to such a space of time as may be sufficient to convince them of the excellence of a Church, must soon take account of the new conditions of the time consciously, as they have long been doing unconsciously. It is not so much a question of what we ought to believe,

as of what we can believe. The kind of half-faith that thinks it expedient to try to seem to hold a doctrine, has had too long and too wide a sway. The curious modern form of theology which holds a creed in gross and abandons it in detail at the same time, natural and even inevitable as it may sometimes be, and prevalent as it undoubtedly is now, is as undoubtedly neither wholesome nor creditable as a permanent attitude of mind. Mr. Beard's question, which he propounds at the commencement, and seeks to answer at the close of his Lectures, is this—what must we do as regards those creeds and confessions of the Reformation which we still suppose ourselves to hold fast as statements of our belief? His answer practically is that there is a considerable part which must be abandoned; and that our whole mental attitude towards them must be revised.

In brief, we are now called upon to make the ancient affirmations of the Churches, in an age when the evidence on which they were based has either changed or must be estimated by other canons of judgment. We cannot read the Bible, or interpret history, or look out upon Nature as the Reformers did. If we are to accept their creeds at all, it must be either by boldly putting our own meaning upon their phrases, or by resolutely shutting our eyes to the best knowledge of our time.

There is a sense in which the issue between progress and stagnation in theology may be said to be decided by the Reformation itself. For it was a revolt against finality, and it would be strange if finality were to be its result. If, as I have tried to prove, it was the first effect of the intellectual movement which is still in full operation, why should it withdraw itself from its influence in its latest and most important stage? I cannot help thinking that Luther, could he live now, would breathe the common air of the intellectual world, and answer to its inspiration as he did to that of his own time. About the greatest minds there is an ever fresh receptiveness; they stand close to the sources of truth, and desire no better than to drink and be satisfied: it is a second and weaker generation, accustomed *jurare in verba magistri*, who subject facts to creeds, and will not permit even God to contradict His own servants. I know, of course, how this argument is sought to be evaded; the Reformation, it

may be said, though in appearance a forward, was really a backward step; it was a recurrence, past an intercalated period of corruption, to primitive purity of belief and a standard which is independent of intellectual progress. But this, after all, only begs the question. If it was admissible for Luther to examine the interpretation put by the Catholic Church upon the Bible and Christian antiquity, it is equally admissible for us to examine Luther's. We are but following his example in testing religious ideas by the surest knowledge of our own day. What if it turns out that his work was only half-done, and could be no more than half-done with the materials at his command? What if the Bible shows by its history and structure that it is unfit to occupy that seat of authority from which, in its favour, he displaced the Church? The truth is that one Reformation always carries in it the seed of another. There are two elements in religion, the permanent and the transient, the divine and the human—a duality which rests upon the fact that what is given by God can only be partially apprehended by man. And it is necessary, in order that the permanent should shine out in its pure and simple splendour, that the transient should gradually drop away. (Pp. 404-6.)

It is possible, however, that the Lecturer over-estimates the importance of the impending change. In all old creeds and systems there are some statements which their warmest supporters explain away; there are still more which many would abandon if forced to give a clear and consistent opinion on them: and the change in doctrine, if made, would be greater theoretically than practically. That some alteration is necessary in the current theology of many Protestants, is hardly doubtful; and it is difficult to believe that some such change will not be forced upon the apparent unity and submission of the Roman Catholic Church. The class of mind which accepts statements on authority solely, or is pacified by the concession of an occasional reason, is not that of a full-grown man. The inroad of the Liberal spirit is manifest even now in the change of attitude from the wrong-headed and devout ignorance of an infallible Pius to the conciliatory and enlightened temper of an equally infallible Leo. If the commands of the Church be

just and true, there must be abundant reasons for them; and the statement that it is inconvenient to give these reasons will tend more and more to rouse suspicion. The *present* attitude of the average devout Catholic I conceive to be accurately stated by the writer of a letter in the *Tablet*, who stated that he accepted Scripture *because* the Church commanded him to do so. This of course leaves the Church free to yield up any untenable position as regards the Bible; but, if Scripture stands on the Church, the Church stands on tradition and succession, and the inquirer will soon ask what is the foundation that underlies this last—the tortoise of the Hindoo mythology.

A wide course of ecclesiastical history, studied in an unbiassed spirit, is perhaps the most powerful solvent of a belief in the infallibility of any Church. We find some of the most eminent founders of tradition engaged in quarrelling very violently about matters of which neither they nor their opponents had much knowledge, and making rigid and precise definitions of things which entirely transcend the scope of human language. The customary answer, that by these wranglings they settled Christian doctrine on a sure foundation, seems eminently unsatisfactory. It is difficult to see what, except common-sense, prevents any one who should wish it from disputing on the very same topics that exercised the Councils. Surely it is more rational and charitable in the historical student to conclude that the often infinitesimal differences of dogma were rather the pretext than the cause of dispute among all but the very subtlest minds. We can recognise the good work which Athanasius and his followers did in securing the triumph of the higher form of faith, while considering the Latin confession (or mixture of two confessions) labelled with his name, no invaluable possession.

It is not therefore from the scientific spirit as such that I expect danger to come to the Roman Church, so much as from that more common temper that grows weary of leading-strings, and suspicious of authoritative assertion without proof. If Science and Religion are ever to fight an



Armageddon, they will find difficulty in selecting the field for a decisive battle. Some conflict, however, there must be between the old forms and the new spirit, and this is what Mr. Beard looks for in a new Reformation which shall carry on the unfinished work of the old to a further stage of development.

Granting that the Reformation was a real step forward in the evolution of civilised society—granting that its work was in part left undone, and in part wrongly done—granting that a new Reformation is needful, and might well arise in our days, I must yet feel considerable doubt as to whether there will be any large and noticeable movement at all akin to the historical Reformation, or any prophet of the new faith such as the Lecturer foresees. Local movements, or a general agreement among the learned of several countries, there may indeed be; but the Reformation itself, by localizing forms of religion and thought, has circumscribed the possible influence of any human reformer; the ground is full of inequalities to arrest the progress of his chariot-wheels. There may be men as great as Luther, but they will not tower as high above their neighbours as he did, nor will they have his opportunity.

Again, there are few European countries where religion—or rather clerical influence—enters so closely into private life as before the Reformation. It is not easy to move the masses except by common grievances and desires, and these will be hard to find. That some new awakening of religion, some reconciliation between science and faith, is about to be inaugurated by a modern prophet in some one country, is not, as far as we can judge, specially improbable, and it is certainly an event much to be desired; but in the present divided state of Christendom, it is hard to see how anything short of supernatural power should give the regenerator of one nation the facility to quicken another, except by long centuries of evangelization through disciples, for which the hurry of modern life hardly leaves time. The Roman Empire levelled the civilised world for Christianity; the Roman Church levelled part of Christendom for the

Reformation: such a condition of society, as far as we can tell, comes not again. It is not so much a prophet of change that is needed as a comprehension of what change has been unconsciously made. Evolution, not revolution, is the watchword of the age; by devious and different paths we believe that all are gradually climbing the slopes of progress, and though the track is misty below and hidden above, we may well believe that the Power which has brought us so far in the long deliberate working out of a mighty purpose, will not desert us in the future. Although we may watch in vain for the coming of a human guide and prophet, yet

Through all Nature's sun-pierced shadow-wall  
Our souls behold one ceaseless-working Soul.

ARTHUR R. ROPES.

## ERNEST RENAN'S RECOLLECTIONS.—II.

**R**ELIGIOUS progress, to be genuine, must, as we conceive, partake of the characteristics of all natural and mental progress. It must combine tranquillity with force and growth. A tree tends to the light, slightly bends before the storm, and through vicissitudes pushes forth its roots and branches with calm persistent energy: fit symbol of the growth of the tree of life.

M. Renan has rendered eminent service to religious truth by the union of calmness and of reverence with the force of just critical conviction.

When Rationalism is impetuous, irreverent, contemptuous; men of fine mind and sensitive heart shrink from it, and but too frequently fly timidly into the arms of Absolutism. Victor Hugo in a noble burst of sentiment exclaimed, "Christ redeemed the world by his tears; Voltaire regenerated it by his smiles." But it is a happy token of our times that the country which owes its deliverance from intolerance to the brilliant sarcasms of Voltaire, shivering the chains of ages, as with the reckless waywardness of lightning, is now mentally aided by the refined, sympathetic, and accurate criticisms of Renan. The foremost of religious Rationalists is now the most prominent in reverence to Religion, and in tender considerateness to the feelings, the foibles, and the fables of man. It is surely high time for us to treat Religionists as men, not as sectarians separated from man, and to be judged by a distinct law. The Jews regarded themselves as God's people, other nations as God's enemies. The Romans saw in Syria and in Asia, only Barbarians. The Roman Catholic Church in

like manner would fain separate her subjects from the rest of mankind, claiming for her Faith and Sacraments all the deeds of virtue which have ever flourished within her borders. This fatal error has been deeply imprinted on the Roman Catholic Church, imitated by other ecclesiastical bodies, and intensified by creeds, rites, liturgies, and admonitions. The result is a severance of man from man. We hear of Christians and Heathens : of the Believers and the Unbelievers : of the Converted and the Unconverted : of the Saved and the Lost. What is this but to perpetuate the " Faithful " and the " Infidel," as used by Roman Catholics and Mahomedans to express in each case their separation from the human race and superiority over the human race ? Such claims increase the power of the Sect, but at the sacrifice of great human virtues. These arrogant and inhuman pretensions produce another result : those who have been always treated and spoken of as outside the charmed circle of the elect, easily become unfair on their side, and impute to the rites and teachings of the Sect weaknesses and crimes which belong to human nature, not sectarian nature. Some Protestants have expressed regret and apprehension at the appreciative language wherewith M. Renan commends the priests of Brittany and St. Sulpice : such regret need not excite our surprise, though we are quite aware that the generosity of appreciation is not reciprocal. But the generous are generous because they do not expect a return. Through the agencies of commerce and of science, and the consequent increased intercommunion throughout the world, there is arising more and more of a blending of ideas amongst nations and amongst religions. The higher Rationalism is daily more and more recognising the cosmic unity of mankind, and the fact that Religion is an essential development of man. Religion is part of man and of human life, not something separate, which has come down from the skies as a gift to some favoured few. Thus Religion is whatever human nature is. When human nature is ignorant, sensual, selfish ; then the Religion of such men is ignorant, sensual, selfish.

When man is noble, pure, generous, thoughtful; then his religion is noble, pure, generous, and to the best of existing knowledge—truthful. The history of Religion is the history of man striving to rise above himself: it is the heaving of the human mind touched, stirred, thrilled, by the unceasing miracle of nature and of man.

Never from lips of cunning fell  
The thrilling Delphic oracle.  
Out from the heart of Nature rolled  
The burdens of the Bible old.

Surely the time has come when Rationalism is strong enough in Europe to enable men like Renan to praise, nay, to make us love men as men, without thereby by word or act striving to perpetuate what we deem their errors. The monks ridiculed the gods of ancient Greece and Rome, but preserved for us the classical poems which have rendered their Elysian fields immortal.

It would carry us too far from our immediate subject to consider the various reasons which have combined in producing the marked dissimilarity between the priests who seceded from the Papal Church in the sixteenth century and founded the Protestant Churches in Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and England, and those who have seceded in our own time; but we are immediately concerned to notice two particulars regarding M. Renan. First, his almost entire reticence as to the injurious workings of the Papal system. The indictment of Paul Bert, so terribly and minutely true, contained in the *Morale des Jésuites* might belong to another religion, for aught we learn from Renan: and yet the very books which supply Paul Bert with his facts, are now the ordinary guides of all French confessors. It is perhaps due to an over-strained delicacy and susceptibility, that M. Renan never gives any opinion calculated to warn those who are but too prone in England to introduce the Confessional or to frequent it. It is true that he devotes two chapters to a curious and melancholy history from which a thoughtful reader might infer a warning. The narrative is remarkable, if only taken as a psychological fact.

It regards a priest who from first to last seems to have been perfectly innocent, good, discreet ; and a lady until the final catastrophe utterly devoid of malice, though becoming the cause of disaster and sad misery to others and to herself. It would have been well if M. Renan had stated what is intimately known to Roman Catholic Bishops, that the incident is one of repeated recurrence, and therefore deserving of attention.

M. Renan seems to have learned the sad history from his mother : it obviously had gravely struck him, for he occupies nearly three chapters with the picturesque but melancholy narrative.

Mademoiselle de Kermelle lived with her father in a quaint antiquated farmhouse near the village church of Tredarrec, a hamlet adjoining the birthplace of Renan. The family of Kermelle was ancient and honourable but reduced to comparative poverty by the Revolution. The parish priest was a man irreproachable, with a serious air tinged with melancholy and subdued by resignation. He was the confessor of the De Kermelle family. The daughter gradually became immersed in a deep love for her confessor. Virtuous and mystical, her love was pure and enthusiastic like that of the devotee to St. Joseph or St. Aloysius, like that of the young man to the Virgin Mary or St. Agnes. It grew and intensified, and she longed for each return to the confessional to hear his voice and to receive his corrections and admonitions. The good priest, either unconscious or deeming it best to seem unconscious, seldom spoke to her outside the confessional. She longed to receive from him some innocent sign of his regard. During an entire year this love which became a worship, increased until her imagination dwelt on wild schemes whereby she might obtain means of rendering him a service and obtaining thereby the reward of some kindly expression of gratitude.

She passed her time in hemming and marking household linen. She marked it with the initials of her confessor, sometimes uniting his initials with her own : still she was dreaming how to get these into his use.

The festival of Christmas approached : the priest's house adjoined the church : it was his custom after the midnight Mass to entertain at supper the mayor and other notabilities of the village. The table was laid out before Mass, so that the housekeeper might be able to attend the service. Mademoiselle de Kermelle secretly obtained the key of the back door of the Rectory, went in and removed the tablecloth and napkins, hiding them in the Manor house. When Mass was over, the theft was detected, causing great surprise, the more so since nothing was removed but the linen. The priest was unwilling to let his guests go away supperless, and while they were consulting what to do the young lady arrived, saying, " You will not decline our good offices this time, Monsieur le Curé, you shall have our linen in a few minutes." The priest, little suspecting the trick, thankfully accepted, and thus her object was accomplished.

The following day this singular robbery was investigated. It seemed perfectly clear that but one person could be guilty, namely, the Clerk's wife. She had been in and out of the Parsonage house for incense during the time of Mass. No one else could have been there ; all the doors were locked. This unfortunate woman, who had for many years been in the service of the Church, was seized and walked off between two gendarmes, calmly protesting her innocence : all the spectators were in tears. Consternation filled the village. Mademoiselle de Kermelle, infatuated by her egotism and imagination, wickedly remained silent. In the meanwhile the priest noticed the initials, and was electrified to see his own interwoven with hers. Immersed in wonder and in thought, he raises his head and sees the venerable form of M. de Kermelle : pale as death, the old man exclaimed amidst his tears, " It is my miserable girl. I have failed ; I ought to have kept a closer watch over her and to have found out what her thoughts were about, but with her constant melancholy, she gave me the slip." The secret was revealed ; the linen was restored. The delinquent had hoped that then all was over. Lost to all moral sense, she forgot that the Clerk's wife was in prison awaiting her trial ;



and she remained plunged in a kind of stupor which had nothing of remorse, and was still more prostrated in consequence of the evident failure of her attempt to move the feelings of the priest. After an innocent woman had been several days in prison on the charge of theft, it was very difficult to let the real culprit go unpunished. She was arrested and taken to St. Brieux for the assizes. Her prostration was so complete that she seemed to be out of the world. The aged father came into court, erect and self-possessed, with a look of melancholy resignation. He came to the bar of the witness-box and deposited on the ledge his scarf and Cross of St. Louis. "Gentlemen of the jury," he said, "I can only put these on again if you tell me to do so; my honour is in your hands. She is the culprit; but she is not a thief: she is ill." His utterance was choked with tears: the court was profoundly moved: the case was instantly dismissed. In the dark of the evening she returned with her father to a home where no one ever smiled again. The Manor house became a tomb from which issued no sign of life. But the Clerk's wife was the first to die. The emotion had been too much for her simple soul. The old man lived on a few years, dying inch by inch in his seclusion. The unfortunate culprit became insane, and an inmate of the hospital of Tréguier.

Those who are acquainted with convent life could tell many such sorrowful histories. Those who advocate the restoration of the confessional and point to benefits resulting from its use, ought to learn from the experience of those who know, and they would discover that thoughtful men do not much dread the rare cases of bad priests using the confessional for bad purposes, but dread gravely the frequently injurious effect of confession when the intentions on both sides are good, as also the not unfrequent effect of confession when one or the other, without being bad, is either weak or imperfect.

The second observation suggested by M. Renan's autobiography, is, that he seems to hold the view that only the *élite* can be justified in leaving the Roman Catholic Church.

This seems to us a grave fallacy, if we are correct in inferring it from the tone of some of his remarks. Requirements must vary with the knowledge of the individual. Renan, with a mind of singular acuteness and keen perception, had been familiar with all the defences of the Roman Catholic position; thus a longer intellectual conflict was required from him, than from another man not equally learned. His intellect discovered the fallacy of all those arguments: another man has not been trained to believe these fallacies, and therefore has less to unlearn. Surely we must allow something to the common sense and common conscience of unsophisticated men and women. The Roman Catholic controversialist claims that he can present the argument for his Church in a very brief compass. Then the reverse must be reasonable—to disprove as briefly what can be so briefly proved. In the Roman Catholic countries—France, Italy, Austria, Spain, South America—there are millions of nominal Roman Catholics who disbelieve, rejecting entirely the Divine Claims of the Papal Church. These belong to all degrees of learning and of thought. With some, disbelief is the result of long and patient research; with others it is the result of clear common sense and a practical conscience; with others, contact with piety and virtue from some more attractive source; with others, contact with the scandals and inferior morality from which the Papal Church seems to be only saved by the presence of a powerful unbelieving majority.

Surely these millions must count as something; we must not limit our regard to the intellectual giants who by accumulated stores of knowledge have vanquished the accumulated forces of skilful sophistry and dogmatic absolutism. Moreover, amongst a large and increasing number, belief has become impossible, quite irrespective of all critical investigations and ecclesiastical controversies, in consequence of facts of science, of history, of comparative religion. It may be asked, whether disbelief is not also caused by a desire to be free from moral restraints. Roman Catholic theology, with cruel and presumptuous

audacity, affirms that disbelief can never occur except as the result of vice, a statement too absurd to treat with gravity ; but it may be reasonably asked whether vice may not be one of the causes of disbelief. It would seem not improbable, if we argued theoretically ; but, guided by experience, we are inclined to think that the reverse is the fact. When a Roman Catholic becomes bad, experience proves that he clings with all the greater tenacity to his Church. Sin makes cowards of us all, and when the conscience reproaches, it causes the guilty person to shrink from losing those means of pardon to which he has been wont to trust. Facts in Ireland, Spain, and Italy will, it is thought, be found fully to substantiate this statement. The more we learn of the operations of the human mind as to change of religious opinion, the more do we find it to be generally quite irrespective of personal sin. Moreover, those who leave a powerful sect, have nearly always far more to lose than to gain by the change. This, we take it, applies equally in whichever direction the change is made, whether *from* Roman Catholicism, or *to* Roman Catholicism. If this view be, as we judge, correct, it raises the whole question of conversion out of the range of vulgar crimination, and spiteful scorn. M. Renan has helped us to this noble appreciation. But, it may be asked, why has he produced an autobiography which would rather tend to make a hesitating Roman Catholic try to banish his doubts and to abide in his Church, than to pursue his investigations and enter upon the solitary and painful pilgrimage in quest of truth ? It is clear that he, personally, has no misgivings. Amidst the happiness of his present life, one fear alone appals him :

I should be very grieved to have to go through one of those periods of enfeeblement during which the man once endowed with strength and virtue is but the shadow and ruin of his former self ; and often, to the delight of the ignorant, sets himself to demolish the life which he had so laboriously constructed. If such a fate be in store for me, I hasten to protest beforehand against the weaknesses which a softened brain might lead me

to say or to sign. It is the Renan, sane in body and mind, as I am now—not the Renan, half destroyed by death and no longer himself; as I shall be if my decomposition is gradual—whom I wish to be believed and listened to.

There is no hesitation in those words, no feeble desire to raise from the ashes the corpse of a buried illusion. But let not the reader be surprised if the departing vision was followed with tearful gaze, full of pathetic memories. Those who, rejecting the Roman Church, came to believe it to be the anti-Christ, might be excused if they turned upon it with the bitterest religious scorn. But those of us who have recognised in the Roman Church many of the lineaments of the Christ of Nazareth, and have learned, within its enclosure, many sacred lessons, and realised therein many forms of human goodness, must inevitably assume an attitude more tender than that of the first reformers, though, as we trust, not less firm, or less truthful. To us the Roman Church is part of the great human family: the Pope to us is not anti-Christ, but an aged man, neither revered by us nor hated by us because he is Pope, but possessing our sympathy, because he is a man. He has his errors, and we have our errors, and all that each man can do is to eschew the errors he perceives.

M. Renan tells us that he is singularly reluctant to give offence, or to assert himself; hence, perhaps, he hardly gives to the inquiring Roman Catholic the encouragement we might have anticipated. But the state of France is probably partly the cause of this reticence. He knows that though Religion is natural to man, and part of man, it needs man's aid. Whatever is a part of man needs aid and culture. This aid in France has never yet been formulated. Until the first Revolution, the Church reigned supreme; and the reign of the Church had proved as fatal to morality as it had been to liberty. The clerical power was soon re-established by Imperialism, with only a partial concession, recognising and maintaining two other Religions, viz., the Synodical Protestant and the Jewish. Therefore the French people have for a long period of time been trained to the

habit of silent dissent when unable to believe one of the three established religions.

The religious status of M. Renan would appear now to be that of the Cosmic Theist ; holding in loving reverence all the religious past ; adoring the Divine Spirit animating the Cosmos, and regarding the Moral Law as part of the Divine Unity of things. Yet he not unfrequently uses expressions implying vagueness as to these fundamental ideas, as if they formed to him a state of mental feeling rather than a profound energising conviction adapted to cheer the sorrowful, to support the tempted, to raise up the fallen. His appears to be a contented tranquil life ; perhaps not needing the support of a profound and clear conviction. But to many, life is full of care and trouble, needing a solid hope ; and without conscious rational and deep trust in the Living God, how shall hope come to cheer the heart of the forlorn ?

But let us resume the story of his life.

To M. Renan the rupture with the Church was full of deep pain : to the convictions of reason and conscience, he yielded all the interests and sentiments calculated to beguile man. The Sulpicians, strong in faith, did not fetter his reading so much as might have been expected : he studied Pascal, Malebranche, Euler, Locke, Leibnitz, Descartes, Reid, Dugald Stewart, Cousin, Jouffroy. Doubts kept forcing themselves before his acute, critical, and sincere mind. His confessor gave him the usual reply : " These are only temptations ; they are of no consequence." But he saw that the doubts were truthful and touched the entire question ; he absolutely refused to obey his confessor and to enter the subdiaconate : minor orders did not seem to bind him so much :

There were times when I was sorry that I was not a Protestant, so that I might be a philosopher without ceasing to be a Christian. Then again, I recognised the fact that the Catholics alone are consistent. A single error proves that a Church is not infallible : one weak part proves that a book is not a revealed one. Outside rigid orthodoxy, there was nothing except Free Thought.

The teachers in St. Sulpice, he says, were quite right in refusing to make any concessions, inasmuch as a single confession of error ruins the whole edifice of absolute truth, and reduces it to the level of human authorities, in which each person makes his selections according to his individual fancy.

In a divine book everything must be true, and as two contradictions cannot both be true, it must not contain any contradiction. But the careful study of the Bible, while revealing to me many historical and æsthetic treasures, proved to me also that it was not more exempt than any other ancient book from contradictions, inadvertencies and errors. It contains fables, legends, and other traces of purely human composition. It is no longer possible for any one to assert that the second part of the book of Isaiah was written by Isaiah. The book of Daniel, which, according to all orthodox tenets, relates to the period of the captivity, is an apocryphal work composed in the year 169 or 170 B.C. The book of Judith is an historical impossibility. The attributing the Pentateuch to Moses does not bear investigation. . . . He is not a true Catholic who departs in the smallest iota from the traditional thesis. What becomes of the miracle which Bossuet so admired: "Cyrus referred to two hundred years before his birth?" What becomes of the 70 weeks of years, the basis of the calculations of universal history, if that part of Isaiah in which Cyrus is referred to was composed during the lifetime of that warrior, and if the pseudo-Daniel is a contemporary of Antiochus Epiphanes? Orthodoxy calls upon us to believe that the biblical books are the work of those to whom their titles assign them. The mildest Catholic doctrine as to inspiration will not allow one to admit that there is any marked error in the Sacred text, or any contradiction in matters which do not relate either to faith or morality. . . . This theory of inspiration implying a supernatural fact, has become impossible to uphold. An inspired book is a miracle. It should present itself to us under conditions totally different from any other book. It may be said: "You are not so exacting in respect to Herodotus and the poems of Homer." This is quite true, but then Herodotus and the Homeric poems do not profess to be inspired books. With regard to contradictions, for instance, no one whose mind is free from theological preoccupations can do other than admit the irreconcilable divergences between the

three synoptical gospels and the fourth gospel, and between the synoptical gospels compared one with the other. For us Rationalists this is not of much importance; but the orthodox reasoner, compelled to be of opinion that his book is right in every particular, finds himself involved in endless subtleties. Silvestre de Sacy was very much perplexed by the quotations from the Old Testament which are met with in the New. He found it so difficult to reconcile them, that he eventually admitted as a principle that the two Testaments are both infallible of themselves, but that the New Testament is not so when it quotes the Old. Only those who have no sort of experience in the ways of Religion will feel any surprise that men of such great powers of application should have clung to such untenable propositions. In these shipwrecks of a faith upon which you have centred your life, you cling to the most unlikely means of salvage, rather than allow all you cherish to go to the bottom. Men of the world who believe that people are brought to a decision in the choice of their opinions by reasons of sympathy or antipathy will no doubt be surprised at the train of reasoning which alienated me from the Christian faith, to which I had so many motives both of interest and inclination for remaining attached. . . .

One of the worst kinds of intellectual dishonesty is to play upon words, to represent Christianity as imposing scarcely any sacrifice upon reason, and in this way to inveigle people into it without letting them know to what they have committed themselves. This is where Catholics who dub themselves Liberals, are under such a delusion. Ignorant of theology and exegesis, they treat accession to Christianity, as if it were a mere accession to a party. They pick and choose, and explain away, and then are indignant if well-informed people tell them that they are not true Catholics. No one who has studied theology can be guilty of such inconsistency, as in his eyes everything rests upon the infallible authority of the Scripture and the Church; he has no choice to make. To abandon a single dogma or reject a single tenet in the teaching of the Church, is equivalent to the negation of the Church and of Revelation. In a Church founded upon divine authority, it is as much an act of heresy to deny a single point as to deny the whole. If a single stone is pulled out of the building, the whole edifice must come to the ground.

Nor is there any good to be gained by saying that the Church will perhaps some day make concessions which will avert the



necessity of ruptures such as that which I felt forced upon me. I am perfectly well aware how far the Church can go in the way of concession, and I know what are the points upon which it is useless to ask her for any. The Catholic Church will never abandon a jot or tittle of her orthodox system. I have no doubt that there will be schisms, more, perhaps, than ever before, but the true Catholic will be inflexible in the declaration: "If I must abandon my past, I shall abandon the whole; for I believe in everything upon the principle of infallibility, and this principle is as much affected by one small concession as by ten thousand large ones." For the Catholic Church to admit that Daniel was an apocryphal person of the time of the Maccabees, would be to admit that she had made a mistake; if she was mistaken in that, she may have been mistaken in others, and she is no longer divinely inspired. I do not therefore in any way regret having been brought into contact, for my religious education, with sincere teachers, who would have scrupulously avoided letting me labour under any illusion as to what a Catholic is required to admit. The Catholicism which was taught me is not the beguiling compromise, suitable only for laymen, which has led to so many misunderstandings of the present day. My Catholicism was that of Scripture, of the Councils, of the Theologians. This Catholicism I loved, and I still respect it; having found it inadmissible, I separated myself from it. This is a straightforward course, but what is not straightforward is to pretend ignorance of the engagement contracted, and to become the apologist of things concerning which one is ignorant. I have never lent myself to a falsehood of this description, and I have looked upon it as disrespectful to the faith to practise deceit with it.

During two years of inward labour, he strove to regard his difficulties as unfounded. He called this crisis of his life *Naphtali*, and often repeated to himself the Hebrew saying, *Naphtoulé Elohim niphtali* (I have fought the fight of God).

My inward feelings were not changed, but each day a stitch in the tissue of my faith was broken; the immense amount of work which I had in hand prevented me from drawing the conclusion. My director, to whom I confided my difficulties, replied in just the same terms as M. Gosselin at Issy, "Inroads upon your faith! Pay no heed to them: keep straight on your way:

these are only temptations and afflictions common to most persons who achieve any progress."

In the meanwhile the traditions of ancient goodness lost not their hold upon him, but rather intensified. Whatever is holy in the past yet lives and will ever live in the heart of humanity. "I come late to the threshold of the mysteries of Him whose worship signifies reason and wisdom, whose temple is an eternal lesson of conscience and truth: Ere finding Thee, I have had to make infinite search."

In March, 1845, during the Holy Week at St. Sulpice his anxious doubts tortured and perplexed him, and we find him writing to a friend, that he had made up his mind not to accept the grade of sub-deacon at the next ordination.

This would not excite any notice, as, owing to his youth, he would be compelled to allow an interval afterwards to elapse. Not that there was any reason why he should care for what people thought. "I must accustom myself to brave public opinion, so as to be ready for any sacrifice. I suffer much at times. This Holy Week has been particularly painful for me. I console myself by thinking of Jesus, so beautiful, so pure, so ideal—Jesus whom I hope always to love;" but, as he wrote afterwards to that same friend, "To be a Platonist, it is not necessary to adore Plato and to believe in all he says."

I sometimes regret that I was not born in a land where the bonds of orthodoxy are less tightly drawn than in Catholic countries. For, at whatever cost, I am resolved to be a Christian; but I cannot be an orthodox Catholic. When I find such independent and bold thinkers as Herder, Kant, and Fichte, calling themselves Christians, I should like to be so too. But I cannot be so in the Catholic faith which is like a bar of iron; and you cannot reason with a bar of iron. Will not some found amongst us a rational and critical Christianity? I will confess to you that I believe that I have discovered in some German writers the true kind of Christianity which is adapted to us. May I live to see this Christianity assuming a form capable of fully satisfying all the requirements of our age! May I myself co-operate in the great work! What so grieves me is

the thought that perhaps it will be needful to be a priest in order to accomplish that; and I could not become a priest without being guilty of hypocrisy.

The long summer vacation of the Seminarist he passed in his native Brittany, and here each person and each place added to the anguish of his heart. "It would be nothing if there were only public opinion to brave. But the pity is that all the softest ties of life are woven into the web that entangles me, and one must pluck out half one's heart to escape from it. Many a time have I wished that man was born either completely free, or deprived of all freedom." It grieved him to give pain to his old Brittany masters who retained such kindly feelings towards him, but his greatest trial regarded his mother.

Although gifted with much native intelligence, she was incapable of understanding that a person's religious faith can be affected because he has discovered that the Messianic explanations of the Psalms are erroneous, and that Gesenius, in his commentary upon Isaiah, is in nearly every point right when combating the arguments of the orthodox. . . . You will understand that I must be very circumspect with regard to my mother. I would rather die than cause her a moment's pain. O God! shall I have the strength of mind to give my duty the preference over her?

He returned to St. Sulpice desolate and sorrowful; the charm of the fairy land was dispelled, everything seemed aimless and gloomy. "*Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus*:" but the wounded bird escaping, has at first no joy in its liberty. During the vacation, his mother had often sung in his hearing her favourite hymns, especially one beginning,

O Joseph, ô mon aimable  
Fils affable.

And when he thought of it, his heart melted within him. As a child he had been in the habit of asking her ten times over in the course of the day, "Mother, have I been good?" And now the idea of a rupture seemed terrible. But his

sister, whose high intelligence had for years been the pillar of fire which lighted his path, wrote from Poland to encourage him.

It sometimes happens that a dreaded and deferred action is accelerated by an unexpected incident. To his amazement he was informed that he was no longer to be attached to the Seminary, but to the Ecclesiastical College of Les Carmes, recently founded by the Archbishop of Paris. His embarrassment was still further increased upon learning that the Archbishop had just arrived at the Seminary, and wished to speak to him, and to arrange his new career. "To accept would be immoral; I felt unable to give the true reason for my refusal, and I would not give a false one." An explanation was therefore made by M. Carbon, and in the course of one single day was completed the rupture which he had intended to spread over several weeks. "Thus on the 6th of October, 1845, I went down, never again to remount them in priestly dress, the steps of the St. Sulpice Seminary. I crossed the courtyard as quickly as I could, and went to the hotel [of Mademoiselle Céleste], which then stood at the north-west corner of the esplanade. The transition from the priestly to the ordinary dress is like the change which occurs in a chrysalis: it needs a little shade. Assuredly it would be of profound interest if any one could narrate all the silent romances associated with this ancient hotel." Many a history of blameless suffering.

M. Le Hir having unlimited confidence in study, advised M. Renan to devote a few years to free study at the Collège de France and at the school of the Eastern languages. But M. Carbon, seeing how miserable must be such a life under pecuniary difficulties and such altered circumstances, offered to find for him some quiet and suitable position. M. Dupanloup, then no longer Superior of St. Nicholas, could not appreciate his difficulties: allusion to German criticism surprised him; for even the labours of M. Le Hir were unknown to him; "Scripture in his eyes was only useful in supplying preachers with eloquent passages;" but as ever, he was kind and generous, and he wrote, "Do you want any

money? This must be in your position. My humble purse is at your service. I should like to be able to offer you gifts more precious than money. I hope that my simple offer will not offend you." M. Renan declined the kind offer with thanks, for his sister had sent him 1,200 francs to tide over this crisis. It is to her that he afterwards dedicated his *Vie de Jésus*. "A l'ame pure de ma sœur Henriette, morte a Byblos, le 24 Septembre, 1861." "Rememberest thou, from the bosom of God where thou reposest, those days when alone with thee, I wrote these pages inspired by the places we visited together? Silent by my side thou didst correct each page and copy it, while the sea, the villages, the mountains, and the valleys lay unfolded at our feet . . . Reveal to me O good Genius, to me whom thou lovest, those truths which survive death, and taking away the fear of it cause one almost to love it."

It was not until the 2nd of November that he was provided with an assistant mastership in a school attached to the Lycée Henri IV., in the Rue de l'Abbé de l'Épée. There he had a room to himself, and was only occupied in teaching for two hours each day, and ere long formed an intimate and attached friendship with a young man interested in the same studies. This friendship and the letters of his sister cheered his solitude. For a little time he kept up intercourse with M. Le Hir, but soon found that the relations between them became strained, and "I broke off an intimacy which could be profitable and pleasant to myself alone."

His sense of desolation during that first month can be gathered from his letters; for whilst declaring "I could only return to Catholicism by the amputation of one of my faculties, by definitely stigmatising my reason and condemning it to perpetual silence," he also says, "Anxiety unnerves me; I have become a laughing stock, as one who is believed to have made a foolish blunder: they laugh at my simple mindedness and look upon me as a fool."

I was terrified at seeing so many ties destroyed in a few hours, and I should have been glad to arrest this progress which seemed too fatal and too rapid. The days which followed were

the darkest of my life. I was isolated from the whole world, without a friend, an adviser, or an acquaintance, without any one to appeal to about me, and this after having just left my mother, my native Brittany, and a life gilded with so many pure and simple affections. Here I am alone in the world and a stranger to it. Good-bye for ever to my mother, my little room, my books, my peaceful studies, and my walks by my mother's side. Good-bye to the pure and tranquil joys which seemed to bring me so near to God; good-bye to my pleasant past, good-bye to those faiths which so gently cradled me. Farewell for me to pure happiness. The past all blotted out, and as yet no future. And then I ask myself, Will the new world for which I have embarked receive me? I have left one in which I was loved and made much of. And my mother, to think of whom was formerly sufficient to solace me in my troubles, was now the cause of my most poignant grief. I was as it were stabbing her with a knife. O God! Was it then necessary that the paths of duty should be so stony? I shall be derided by public opinion, and all the future before me pale and colourless. [It seemed to him so hard a thing to recommence life at the age of three-and-twenty.] I could scarcely realise the possibility of having to fight my way through the motley crowd of turbulent and ambitious persons.

At double that age such a prospect might indeed have seemed terrible, but surely the system must be fatally bad, which can thus at once captivate and destroy the young man of twenty-three, threatening to render to him any future impossible. Perhaps some sentimental dreamers who have been born free may be less prodigal in their commendations of Ecclesiastical Romanism, less censorious on the party of free thought abroad and at home, when they learn how deep are the wounds caused by chains they have never experienced. Those who have been emancipated may speak generous words as to the good, and restrain with difficulty other words that might with terrible truth be uttered; but surely it ill becomes those who have never suffered to have all their defences for the mental and moral oppressors of man, all their reproachful criticisms for those who have been or are being oppressed, and whose efforts may not be entirely in harmony with the notions of those

who can use, palliate, and explain away the language and the deeds of orthodox absolutism. The accusations are suspected, of those who have suffered, and whose lives and hopes have been blighted; but those who have suffered nothing need not become the defenders and palliators of Ecclesiastical evil, when they might be its impartial opponents. Then might be left to those who have suffered, the graceful words of gratitude for well-meant intentions. The poet sees in the past, the golden age: a poetic Rationalist like Renan recalls with picturesque emotion the memories of his youth, exulting in the fragrance of its innocence. He has illuminated these with the tranquil splendour of his genius—by the force of that genius he has more than surmounted all the impediments he perceived, all the difficulties he dreaded: the joy of life has gladdened him as he never dared to hope. “My experience of life has been very pleasant; and I do not think that there are many human beings happier than I am. I have a keen liking for the Universe. . . . I have found a fund of goodness in nature and in society. Circumstances have always thrown me into communication with very worthy men.” He claims for himself an almost unchangeable good temper, the result of moral healthiness; a well-balanced mind, tolerably good bodily health; a spirit of quiet philosophy and grateful optimism. “The infinite goodness which I have experienced in this world inspires me with the conviction that Eternity is pervaded by a goodness not less infinite, in which I repose unlimited trust.” As a Cosmic Theist, he professes his belief in a Divine afflatus inspiring and guiding for the sake of the whole, the ever growing Totality, the Universal Unity. Unrestrictedly Rationalist, though conservative in his application of the critical process to the sacred Books, he deems his conclusions sounder than those of the Tubingen school.

He has endeavoured to be polite and kind to all, giving credit for goodness to every human creature. “I could not even behave unkindly to a dog; or treat him roughly, and with an air of authority.” “I am not aware of having told



a single untruth since 1851 " or " stabbed another author with my words." Year by year an anonymous letter threatens him with hell, " but hell is a hypothesis very far from being in conformity with what we know of the divine mercy. Moreover I can lay my hand upon my heart and say that if there is such a place, I do not think that I have done anything which would consign me to it. A short stay in purgatory would perhaps be just." Through M. Augustin Thierry who has been " in the true sense of the word a spiritual father for me," he was introduced to the Scheffer family " whom I have to thank for a companion who has always assorted herself so harmoniously to my somewhat contracted conditions of life that I might be at times tempted to believe in predestination."

So has this lover of truth fought his battle and prevailed : for truth he suffered : in truth he rejoices. " A Paradise lost is always, for him who wills it so, a Paradise regained. Truth is, whatever may be said to the contrary, superior to all fictions." He has loved those who in any age, loved goodness and sought truth : he has never calumniated those who moulded his nation's history : he has never derided the poetic legends of credulity. " I never feel my liberal faith more firmly rooted in me than when I ponder over the miracles of the ancient creed, nor more ardent for the work of the future, than when I have been listening for hours to the bells of the imaginary town of Is." Once to him the Church alone was sacred, the World profane and desolate. He has now found a Universe, the All Holy and Beautiful One immanent therein.

ROBT. RODOLPH SUFFIELD.

### *THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF COMTE.*

**O**F the many utopian schemes that during the last fifty years have agitated Europe, there are few at the present hour in England that show the least signs of vitality. While the Continent has been, and is being, rocked to its base by Nihilism and other wild projects for the regeneration of society, we have escaped almost entirely unscathed. Fourierism, St. Simonism, and other forms of Socialism have each had their day, and, after exciting a transient and ephemeral interest, have almost completely disappeared. No name of note is now to be found on the roll of their followers; and, if here and there an occasional adherent be met with, he will probably be some obscure, uncultured dreamer who, shut out from the great currents of healthy political activity, has become the slave of merely abstract and one-sided speculation. But there is one school of utopists which numbers in its ranks some of the most cultured minds of the time, whose influence and following are extending from year to year. I allude to the Society of Positivists—the avowed followers of Auguste Comte. That this particular school of thought should have drawn to itself some of the foremost minds is due largely to the splendid genius of the master, whose commanding insight, ranging as it does over the whole field of speculation, is still up to the level of the most advanced thought. That it should now be attracting many from among the general public is due, not only to the powerful and sustained advocacy of its small body of eminent disciples, but also to the attitude taken by them on the great political questions of the day. The reader will, no doubt, have observed that when any

political crisis occurs, and the different churches and sects stand halting between two opinions, not knowing whether to follow God or Baal, the Positivists, prepared for the emergency, step boldly to the front with their manifestoes, in which will be found a clean-cut opinion on the situation and issues involved. These manifestoes contain no traces of political expediency; but, on the contrary, are characterised by the consistency with which they apply to the concerns of nations and peoples and classes the same eternal principles of justice that are universally recognised as binding between individuals. In the trade disputes, for example, which excited so much animus between masters and workmen some years ago, they uniformly supported the rights of the workmen to combine against the oppression of masters, who, strong enough to ignore the workmen in detail, were forced to respect them when aggregated in great organised combinations. They are always found on the side of the weak against the strong, of justice against expediency. They claim for Ireland the right to Home Rule, and for India the blessings of self-government. They have no political bias, are entirely free from party ties, and, like a great moral force, deal out their censures to Whig and Tory indifferently. They condemned alike the Zulu and Afghan wars of Lord Beaconsfield, the Boer and Egyptian wars of Mr. Gladstone. They would have us give up Gibraltar to Spain, and thereby set an example of political magnanimity to the other nations of Europe.

By thus raising their voices for liberty, for justice, and for political magnanimity, they have excited the interest of the high-minded and enlightened; while, by standing firm and unbending when all around is distracted and vacillating, they have drawn to their side many of those who, amid the general wreckage of all old faiths, are fascinated by the spectacle of consistency and steadfastness of principle. And yet neither their principles nor their attitude have about them anything that is distinctively and peculiarly Positivist. The Christian religion announces precisely the same principles, and in the earlier periods of its history it maintained pre-

cisely the same attitude towards the then existing powers. For it is the privilege of young and militant sects to preach their doctrines in all their naked purity, and to bring all matters for judgment before the bar of simple morality. But when once they have risen to supremacy, and have to bear the responsibilities of power and action, their principles become largely diluted with expediency, and so lose that elevation and purity which first drew after them the sympathies of men. We can easily understand, therefore, that the Positivists, being free from power and responsibility, should not only bring all international complications for judgment before the moral law pure and simple, but should also escape the vacillation and inconsistency which must inhere in the calculations of expediency. Indeed, were the principles of the Positivists the noblest, and their attitude the most stern and unbending, we should still expect that in the rough work of the world their principles would lose some of their lustre, and their attitude something of its stoical and uncompromising nature. But the truth is, their principles are not as liberal as they would appear. There could be no greater delusion than to imagine that because in treating of current politics the Positivists are found on the side of liberty, of individual and national expansion, these great ends are therefore the soul and animating principles of their social system. Roman Catholicism has always united with other sects in demanding religious toleration when there was no chance of its own supremacy. It is so, too, with the Positivists. Despairing of establishing their own *regime* until they have converted the greater part of the world to their opinions, they bend all their energies in the meantime to the task of clearing away those old despotisms of government, of opinion, and of tradition which stand in the way of their own ascendancy. But it is not for the cause of liberty that they do this. On the contrary, did they succeed they would replace these old worn-out despotisms by a despotism of their own, more subtle and far-reaching than any the world has yet seen.

To make this apparent, I shall endeavour so to exhibit

the political system of Auguste Comte as best to disclose its secret structure and tendencies. I shall then attempt to show that all his errors arise from a single source, viz., the making of humanity, *as a whole*, the centre of his system, instead of the elevation of the individual, and so, by throwing his weight on Order, at the expense of Progress, repressing expansion and liberty. I am, of course, aware that in making Comte the representative of Order at the expense of Progress, I am running counter to his own express announcement. He distinctly asserts that Progress is the end of his social scheme, and that Order is merely his basis, his means, his instrument. Nevertheless, if we examine his system carefully, we shall find that he has sacrificed his end to his means, and that in his zeal for Order he has gone far to strangle Progress. For a writer's principles are, after all, to be judged, not by the magnificence of his scheme in general, but by the tendencies of its provisions in particular, as a man's aims are determined, not by the grandeur of his professions, but by the objects he is actually seen striving to realize. Comte was an accomplished thinker, and was fully cognisant of all the conditions essential to the solution of the great problems of modern society. It was not likely, therefore, that in his general outline he should overlook any important factor. On the contrary, he has been careful to surround himself with a philosophical network so extensive and all-embracing as to leave little chance of anything important escaping him. He has made provision for order and progress, for culture and aspiration, for action and contemplation. But when we strip off the superficial phrases and generalities that obscure his real plan, and examine its true bearings, we shall find that each of its parts is so constructed as to promote the order and stability of society as a whole, at the expense of individual expansion and enlargement. In saying that Comte has gone far towards sacrificing Progress to Order, I do not mean to infer that he was indifferent to Progress. On the contrary, he has declared that Order and Progress are both equally necessary to the welfare of society. But Order and Progress, although equally

necessary, are mutually opposed, and in consequence it is as difficult to hit both with equal directness by one scheme as by one blow to hit two objects that lie in opposite directions. For just as the harmonious movements of the stars are secured, not by one compound force, but by the two opposite centrifugal and centripetal forces, so the orderly progress of States is best secured by the existence of two political parties, each of which is pledged to one side alone. If no one scheme, then, can hit with equal directness both Order and Progress, the only alternative for a speculative thinker is to decide which of these ends he thinks most important, to aim at that, and trust that the other will be hit in the rebound. Comte preferred Order, and his choice drew after it the same artillery of means as if it had been his exclusive aim. For it may be laid down as a law that although in practical life you can temper your principles to the exigencies of the occasion, it is impossible to do so in any general scheme of life constructed without reference to time, place, or circumstance. A good instance of this is seen in the teaching of Carlyle and Emerson. These eminent thinkers both saw that men on the one hand were radically *alike* in their essential natures, and, on the other, that they were *unlike* in their range of thought and sentiment. But to lay out a scheme of life and conduct that would equally embrace these opposite truths was not possible. They were obliged, accordingly, to choose which they would prefer to satisfy—the identity or the diversity. Emerson chose the identity or likeness of man as the basis of his teaching; Carlyle the diversity. The consequence was that Emerson's teaching ran into the extreme of liberty; Carlyle's into the extreme of despotism. So, too, with Comte. Having made Humanity as a whole the centre both of his religious and his social system, he was bound to subordinate the expansion of the individual to the symmetry and stability of society as a whole, until at last, by the very nature of things, he was driven into drawing the cords of Order so tight as to strangle individual expansion and development.

With these preliminary observations, I now propose to

examine Comte's political and social scheme, with the view of pointing out the great laws of human life which he has neglected. But before we can grasp his scheme in its logical completeness, we must discover the reasons for his making Humanity the central point of his system. Previous to his time there was no general science of Sociology; that is to say, no general laws had been discovered to which the progress and development of Mankind as a whole could be referred. Humanity at large was regarded much in the same way as a flight of crows or a forest of trees is regarded, viz., as a mere aggregate of isolated individuals. And as each of these individuals was liable to be moved by influences—supernatural and other—which defied all law and calculation, no one was likely to dream that a science of society was possible. But from the time when it began to appear that these supernatural conceptions themselves were the products of human thought, that they were not capricious and casual, but followed a regular course and order of development, men began to entertain the hope that great general laws might be discovered to which the total movements of Humanity could be shown to conform. Comte professed to have discovered these laws, and to have marked out the stages through which mankind had passed in its course and development; and so, for the first time, he was enabled to figure Humanity, not as a mere *aggregate* of isolated individuals, but as a *unity*, an *organism*, a *life*. Hence it is that he represents Humanity as a Great Being, and pictures it as some immense mammal, which in its growth and development has come down from the Past, and is stretching onwards into the Future; the Individual being but a cell or molecule in its huge frame. And just as it is only the animal organism as a whole that can be regarded as a real entity, the cells of which it is composed having no distinct independent life, so Comte constantly repeats that "Humanity is the only real existence, the Individual being a mere metaphysical abstraction."

Such is the train of thought by which Comte arrives at his conception of Humanity as a Great Being, and by



which he makes it, and not the Individual, the centre of his system. Now, from this conception and from the analogies that exist between Humanity and other vital organisms, his whole scheme of social reorganisation may be logically deduced. A few broad instances will suffice to make this apparent. In the animal body, for example, the organs, tissues, and cells of which it is composed do not exist on their own account, but to do the special work assigned them; they are not independent and unrelated, but have vital connections with every other part, and are kept in strict subordination to the welfare of the body as a whole. So in Comte's scheme the special classes and individuals of which society is composed have each to do the special work assigned them, and keep themselves strictly subordinated to the welfare of society as a whole. Priests and bankers, manufacturers and merchants, women and working men, have each their respective functions minutely defined by him—functions not to be altered except at the behest of high necessity. For just as any attempt on the part of an organ or tissue to set up for itself and to do as it pleased, would end in the disruption of the body, so any attempt on the part of an individual to follow the bias of his own genius or character would, Comte thinks, end in the disruption of society. Accordingly, he preaches the *duty* of each individual to occupy the position assigned him, not the *right* of every man to choose his own path according to the secret impulses of his nature. Liberty and the Rights of Man, he thinks, lead to anarchy, and are therefore to be repressed. His new watchword is "Duties, not Rights." But as the power of deciding what particular function a man is to fulfil must be vested in the hands of one or more persons, the scheme, as we should expect, ends in despotism. For it is the essence of despotism that the lives and fortunes of men should be placed, not in the hands of Fate and Nature, with their just and equal laws, but in the hands of some poor creature like ourselves, who, ignorant of himself perhaps, impudently professes to gauge the hidden depths and capacities of other souls, and with easy

assurance proceeds to distribute them into the niches which he thinks they are best fitted to occupy.

But this analogy between Humanity and the animal organism is carried by Comte still further into his scheme of social reorganisation. He figures the animal body as made up of two distinct and independent sets of organs—the nutritive and the cerebral—which have distinct and independent functions. The nutritive organs consist of lungs, heart, liver, and other tissues, and carry on the nutrition and support of the body. The cerebral organs consist of the brain and nervous system, and their function is so to co-ordinate and regulate the action of the nutritive organs that they shall all work harmoniously for the good of the whole. Now, corresponding to these organs of nutrition and cerebration in the animal body are the Temporal and Spiritual powers in the body politic. The Temporal power consists of governors, directors, and administrators; and its function is to superintend the organisation of industry and carry on the work of practical administration. The Spiritual power consists of the philosophic Priesthood, and its function is to moderate by its moral pressure the exercise of the Temporal power for the benefit of the community at large. And just as Comte finds the organs of nutrition and innervation distinct and independent, so he would make the Temporal and Spiritual powers distinct and independent. The Spiritual power is to be concentrated in the hands of the High Priest of Humanity, backed by women and working men (the former of whom represent the sympathetic side of Humanity, and the latter its active side), and will act by the purely moral methods of persuasion and sympathy. The Temporal power will be concentrated in the hands of Three Bankers (as dealing with the widest relations of Industry), supported by a staff of merchants and manufacturers, who will be arranged according to the greater or less generality of the functions they perform, and who act on their own initiative, subject only to the advice of the Spiritual power; the wealth they administer being held, not as private property, but as a public trust.

Such is a broad outline of Comte's scheme of social reorganisation, founded on the analogy he finds to exist between Humanity and other organisms—an analogy that might be carried into minute and minuter details. It has analogies, too, with that Catholic Feudalism for which Comte had so great an esteem; Humanity taking the place of God; the High Priest of Humanity, of the Pope; and a number of small republics, presided over by Three Bankers, the place of the kingdoms and principalities of the Middle Ages.

Now, in this scheme of social reorganisation, Comte has neglected two great laws of human life—laws which must consign any scheme constructed in disregard of them to the dreamland of utopia. These laws are—

- 1st. That men are alike in their essential natures.
- 2nd. That they are led by the Imagination.

However different men may be in their special gifts and capacities, there can be no doubt that they are alike in their essential natures. Compared with that deep likeness that is common to them all, any mere superficial difference in kind or degree of faculty is as insignificant as is the difference among the billows when compared with the deep unity of the great underlying sea. No one denies that men are alike in their physical conformations—in their lungs, heart, stomach, bones, muscles, and tissues. Why should not their minds be alike also—their impulses, feelings, tendencies, and passions? Is there any faculty wanting in the average man? Is there any trade, art, or profession which he cannot learn? Will education and training not make of him a better or worse tailor, shoemaker, lawyer, doctor, statesman, or scholar? Is there, indeed, any human sentiment that he cannot comprehend? Shakspeare, the most profound and subtle of all writers, is universally intelligible; so also would be the metaphysicians and philosophers, were it not for their use of a technical and forbidding nomenclature. If, then, the differences among men are poor and insignificant compared with their common likeness, to regard Humanity as an organism in the strict

sense of that term, and on that basis to construct a scheme of social reorganisation, is equally absurd and chimerical. Of course, as a creature, man has feelings of pride, vanity, love, pity, mercy, which *connect* him with his fellow-man. By reason of this relationship he must act and react on others, must modify and be modified by them. But to suppose that Humanity is an organism merely because the individuals of which it is composed act and react on one another, and so, in a certain sense, form a kind of corporate existence, is about as reasonable as to suppose that the Solar System is an organism because sun, moon, and planets act and react on each other; or that the animal kingdom at large is an organism because, during the long ages of the past, each animal has, in the struggle for existence, modified and been modified by all the rest. If then, we seek for the differences between Humanity as a corporate existence and the higher animal organisms which it is supposed to resemble, we shall find that they are so radical and profound as to destroy any political scheme founded on the assumed likeness. In the first place, the higher vital organisms have a fixed and definite structure, the cells and organs of which they are composed having a definite relationship to each other and to the whole. But Humanity has no fixed structure, no definite relationship either of individuals or classes, but changes its structure and character from age to age. At one time we have Feudalism, with its popes, kings, nobility, and serfs; at another, Theocracy, with its supremacy of priests and hierarchy of castes; and again, Republicanism, with its liberty, equality, and rights of man. In the second place, in vital organisms the condition of the organism as a whole is of primary importance, the condition of the parts being of importance only in so far as they affect the whole; whereas in Humanity the condition of the individual is the important point, the condition of society as a whole being but a sequence and after-effect of the state of the individual; any revolution in individual thought and sentiment altering entirely the character of society as a whole. And lastly (and here we see

the neglect of the fact of the identical nature), we have a still more fatal and radical difference between Humanity and the higher organisms. In the higher vital organisms the cells and organs are so constructed as to do one special kind of work, and one only; the higher the organism the more specialised and limited being the work of its separate parts. The cells of the liver and brain have each their separate functions which cannot be interchanged; so also have the lungs, stomach, and heart. But the individuals of which Humanity is composed are, on the contrary, so constructed as not only to do one kind of work and adapt themselves to one set of circumstances, but to do any kind of work and adapt themselves to any set of circumstances. Each man has, equally with every other man, an inlet into the common sea of knowledge and truth, although the conditions of life usually restrict his energies to some one or more special department of labour. For just as the eye is made to sweep the horizon, although it is directed from moment to moment on the different objects around us, so the mind of man is made to span the arch of heaven and travel through all the constellations of genius and virtue, although it must bend its energies on the practical problems that present themselves for solution from hour to hour. While each man, then, has a bias or special power which is his strong point and makes one particular kind of work easier to him than another—whether it be mechanics, art, poetry, philosophy, or practical administration—he has also within him a general or universal power which can grasp indifferently each or any of these different branches of knowledge. Any system, therefore, that ignores this deep likeness of nature common to all men, and on the superficial likeness existing between Humanity and other vital organisms would erect a scheme of practical politics, is doomed to failure. Any system that without consulting a man's special bias and genius would condemn him (on the judgment or caprice of others or another) to become a mere cog or wheel in the vast machine of society, to be eternally grinding out his own particular product, without right of

entry into the open field of universal truth, has already passed into the cloudland of utopia. The Hindoos were taught to believe that certain classes sprang from the head, others from the trunk, and others again from the feet of Brahm. By accepting this degrading superstition, and, in consequence, denying the native identity of all men, they split themselves up into a hierarchy of castes, the result of which may be seen in the stagnation in which India lies at the present hour, her sweltering millions being as uninteresting to the aspiring mind as a swarm of moving insects—the more, the worse. Would Comte have us repeat this Hindoo superstition, and again erect a social system on the basis of Caste? He does not, I am aware, in theory go to this extreme length; but his system, if put in operation, would end in a caste despotism. For example, he makes provision in his scheme for a priestly class, for an administrative class, and for a working class. These classes are to take rank according to the greater or less generality of the functions they perform, and in the higher ranks are to recruit themselves by choosing their own successors. They are also expected to remain satisfied with their respective positions, and to do the work assigned them without aspiration and without choice. Who can doubt that this scheme would become an intolerable despotism before it had well time to set? Comte partially perceived this, and proposed to guard against it by giving all men alike the same education, and thereby satisfying the feeling of common equality. But he apparently did not perceive that if he ranged men in a fixed hierarchy of classes, the higher would despise the lower to the end of time, spite of all education; and so would be brought back all those evils which his system was intended to avoid. And, furthermore, in spite of the fact that he would have all men equally educated, he still thought it necessary to put them in leading strings, and that, too, in an age when the only plea for despotism that still survives and retains any show of plausibility is the fact that men are *not* educated, and, in consequence, are not able to manage their own affairs. The

truth is Comte believed in Caste, that is to say, he laid more stress on the small superficial differences of men than on their great fundamental likeness; and so, instead of allowing each man to know best what was the proper direction for his genius and character, would place our whole spiritual and temporal concerns in the hands of a High Priest of Humanity and Three Bankers, who (being phrenologists) would by some such "cheap signboard as the shape of the head or colour of the beard, sum up the inventory of our characters and fortunes." Let us hope, on the contrary, that the time is not far distant when any attempt to prevent a man from having a chance for the full development of his genius and character, as a bird is allowed to build its nest according to its own nature, will be regarded as a conspiracy against the dignity of the human mind and treason against the laws of God.

Having pointed out some of the consequences of Comte's neglect of the great law that men are *alike* in their essential natures, I come now to the second great neglect in the scheme of positive polity—the neglect of the law that men are led by the Imagination.

In making Humanity as a whole the end of his social system, Comte treats individual men as if they were so many pieces in a Chinese puzzle, and expects—nay, believes—that when he has discovered the way in which they are to be arranged so as to form a stable and harmonious structure, they will remain in the positions in which he has placed them. It is not surprising that he should believe that individuals are so easily manipulable when we remember that he regards them as mere metaphysical abstractions. We have seen the way in which he constructs his social scheme, with his checks, balances, and compensatory movements; how he separates the Spiritual from the Temporal power; the former acting by purely moral means (supported by the sympathy of women and working-men), the latter by its material power and command over the products of industry. Having disposed the different classes of society in this way, Comte believes that the individuals



of which they are composed will accept the positions assigned them, and will continue to occupy them from a sense of duty alone, without inclination, aspiration, or choice. The practical difficulties that lie in the way of his scheme he makes as little of as Captain Bobadil did of the numbers and force of the enemy to which he was opposed. He has no fear that men will refuse to keep the positions assigned them, as they will be judged entirely by their intellectual and moral qualities, and not by their social position. And as he asserts that there will be no desire for fame, power, or applause, but only to do one's duty, there need be no fear of any conflict of jurisdiction, of any encroachment of one class on another. The priesthood of philosophers will not dream of interfering in practical politics, as it would be beneath their dignity, and besides would weaken their speculative faculty by its attention to petty details. Any such unworthy ambition for vulgar power would be regarded, both by themselves and others, as a sign of moral weakness and mental deficiency. Practical politicians, on the other hand, he believes, will restrict themselves entirely to their duty of keeping order, and would deem it an impertinence to claim any authority over thought. And in like manner women will renounce their utopia of what is called "woman's rights," and will concern themselves entirely with their household duties, the education of their children, and the giving of their moral support to the spiritual power. The working man, too, will be equally reasonable and self-denying, and will be as easily managed as either the women, the politicians, or the priests. He will be content to remain where he is. He will not seek power; indeed, he would not have it were it thrust on him. It is only exceptional persons, Comte thinks, who care for power on its own account. Neither will he care for fame—a bauble beneath the concern of sensible men. And when it has to be bought by meditation, as among the philosophers and priests, or is burdened by care, as among the practical statesmen, Comte distinctly declares that the working man will have nothing to do with

it. Is it not enough for the working man, he asks, that all other classes should be working for his benefit? Why, then, should he give himself either thought or trouble for so unreal a phantasm? And, as to wealth, the working man will ask himself what connection it has with true happiness; and finding that it has none whatever, but that, on the contrary, true happiness depends far more on the free play of all our powers (in which respect, indeed, the working man is in a much better position than those above him in the social scale), he will feel it no sacrifice to renounce it entirely. "The working man," says Comte, "will cease to aspire to wealth and power, leaving these to those whose political activity requires that strong stimulus. Each man's ambition will be to do his work well."

Such is the beautiful utopia which Comte expected to see realised in a generation from the time in which it was promulgated. That generation has already come and gone, and as we are apparently as far from its realisation as ever, there must have been some great law of human life neglected in his calculations. That law, as I have already said, is that men are led by the Imagination. I am aware, of course, that Comte made the acceptance of his political scheme conditional on the acceptance of his religious and scientific views, and that it was only because he imagined that these views would be accepted as soon as they were promulgated that he anticipated so speedy a realisation of his political scheme. He is constantly declaring that before his practical scheme can be realised there must be what he calls a spiritual reorganisation; that is to say, a reorganisation of opinion and belief, and not of caucuses, electors, or ballot-boxes. Now, I have already endeavoured to point out the scientific fallacies in his speculative opinions, when regarded from their political side. On some other occasion I may endeavour to point out the spiritual fallacies in these opinions when regarded from their religious side. For the present, however, we may fairly assume that they will not meet with that immediate acceptance which he imagined. But even admitting that his speculative theories should prove

to be abstractly true, to believe that men will hasten to realise the political scheme founded on them, merely because he has demonstrated that such a scheme would be for the greatest *absolute* good of all concerned, is as utopian as to believe that a reign of universal peace will follow on a demonstration of the benefits of peace by the Peace Society, or, varying the analogy, that a woman will fall in love with a man merely because he can be proved to be the possessor of all the virtues. The truth is, men are not led by what is *absolutely* best for themselves, either in this world or the next, but by recondite and subtle combinations of thought, feeling, and fancy which have fascinated their *imagination*s, and are *proportioned* to their stages of culture. Proportioned to their stages of culture—for while a cruder conception would disgust by its coarseness, a more refined one would repel by its comparative coldness and tenuity. There could not have been, perhaps, two men more antagonistic in nature and attributes than Shelley and Tom Sayers, and yet if the world were canvassed as to which was the better man, it is a question whether the prize-fighter would not poll as many votes as the ideal poet. The Christian Heaven is a much more refined conception than that of the Mahommedan or Norseman; and yet, I doubt not, the Mahommedan with his Heaven despoiled of its bright-eyed houris, and the Norseman with his Valhalla stripped of its bloody trophies, would feel as if their principal incentives to virtue had been withdrawn. In the same way, the Religion of Humanity is a much more abstract belief than Christianity, and the rewards it holds out to virtue are of a much more thin and transcendental character. If Christianity, therefore, with a creed which was believed in and which was supported by rewards more tangible and alluring than any which the Religion of Humanity has to offer, could not, in its nineteen centuries of organised effort, subdue the spirit of the world and the fascinations of Power, Wealth, and Fame, much less will the religion of Auguste Comte. The truth is, Power, Wealth, and Fame are the most potent influences in human life, and are so

proportioned to our present stage of civilisation and culture as to fascinate the imaginations of the great masses of men more than aught else beside. Any political scheme, therefore, that ignores them, or disposes of them as by a wave of the hand, has already passed into that land of dreams to which Plato's Republic and More's Utopia have long since been relegated. And although it was a fine illustration of Comte's innocence and simplicity that he should have imagined that philosophers would have no practical schemes, and practical politicians no political theories; that women would efface themselves; that working men would renounce fame, wealth, and power, and that all classes would live only to do their duty in the positions in which they were placed, it nevertheless exhibited more faith in the power of an abstract system of thought than either history or the nature of things will warrant. The fact is, neither the past nor the present organisation of society has been due to conscious forethought or speculative considerations as to what would be best for the general welfare, but rather, is the resultant of the efforts and struggles of many different men, each of whom was pushing his own way, led on by ideas and designs that had fascinated the Imagination. Were the Temporal and Spiritual powers of the Middle Ages, for example, separated because popes and kings had come to the conclusion that such a separation was best both for themselves and for the peoples living under their sway? On the contrary, it was the result of centuries of struggle between these respective potentates, in which each foot of ground gained or lost was contested inch by inch. Did the popes cease to interfere in Temporal affairs because they believed that such interference was detrimental to the general weal? On the contrary, they ceased to interfere only when the power of doing so had been taken from them by the kings. The kings, in like manner, ceased to interfere in Spiritual affairs, not from any speculative considerations, but because the power of interfering had been taken from them by the popes; for no sooner had the Reformation arrived, and the popes lost their prepon-

derating power over the people, than the kings stepped in again and took up the rôle of defenders of the faith. The Press, too, which in our own time is believed by some to be the most real and vital Spiritual power extant—has it not had to fight its way up to its present high position inch by inch? And Democracy, which many believe to be the political creed of the future—has it won its successes without a struggle? If Comte's scheme, then, of the division of the Temporal and Spiritual powers is ever again to be realised by the world, it will not be because men will have consciously abnegated their own special schemes, and will then proceed to carry into effect the cut-and-dried system which he has evolved; but it will be because it is the natural outcome and resultant of the efforts of innumerable men, each of whom has been following the course of thought and action which has most charmed his Imagination.

But it may be said that society will always be made up of different classes—working men, tradesmen, professional men, magistrates, rulers—and that Comte merely professes to have given them that scientific arrangement which shall be for the highest and truest welfare of all concerned. Here, again, we see the neglect of the same great fact that men are led by the Imagination. For there is all the difference between my following a particular trade, art, or profession of my own free will and choice, and my being compelled by another to follow it because I am told it will be ultimately for my best and truest welfare. In the first instance, the Imagination is free to range at large, without let or hindrance, amid an infinite variety of thought and aspiration, and with no limits to its flight save those which arise from Fate and Nature themselves. The result is that men awake to a sense of responsibility; they learn the great laws of the world in their contact with the many sides of life; their manhood becomes firmer in its fibre, like trees that have to hold their own against the wintry blasts; and, as in America, they can turn their hands to anything, and, toss them how you will, they will always fall on their

feet. But, on the other hand, when a man is pressed into an occupation by the will of others or another, without regard to the secret aspirations which have fascinated his own mind, then Imagination is crushed, life becomes a dreary mechanical routine, without excitement, ambition, or hope; sinking, at last, into torpor or despair, relieved only by intrigue, insurrection, or crime. And who is to claim this omniscient power of determining the position each man is best fitted to occupy? In the last resort, it is some poor creature like ourselves.

Such are the utopian schemes to which Comte commits himself by making society as a whole the end of his political system, and not the elevation and expansion of the individual.

Such, too, is the difference between the attitude of the Positivists and of Positivism itself. The Positivists, as I pointed out at the beginning of this paper, being a militant power without official responsibility, and entirely free from party ties, are able to preach the great ends of liberty, justice, and political magnanimity in all their fulness and purity. Believing, too, as they do, that political institutions are good or bad *relatively* to the wants of the people among whom they exist, rather than *absolutely* in accordance with the demands of the highest culture and wisdom, they are bound to advocate the rights of all peoples and nationalities to develop themselves in their own peculiar way, without interference from without, and in consequence to make the moral law as binding between nations as between individuals. But Positivism itself, on the other hand, when once it had become supreme, and had gathered the nations under its own *régime*, would end, as we have just seen, in the most intolerable of despotisms. The fact that the Positivists are very often right in their political judgments is not the result of their system, but is due rather to the circumstance that they are men of wide political knowledge, of varied culture and intelligence, and to the habit (not peculiar to themselves) of judging all questions from the highest of all standpoints—the moral standpoint.

J. B. CROZIER.

ON THE READING "ONLY-BEGOTTEN GOD."

JOHN i. 18.

THE greater number of various readings in the MSS. of the New Testament are unimportant, and the preferableness of one over another may be left to the decision of critics. But some have a doctrinal significance, and as the interest of these is not confined to a class, so their evidence may be understood without any special qualifications. A reading of this kind, long known to scholars and almost universally rejected, has obtained lately some additional support; and has been brought before the world, with a measure of commendation, in the Revision of the New Testament. The last verse of the Introduction of S. John's Gospel (i. 18) stands unchanged; but in the margin to "*the only-begotten Son*" we have "Many very ancient authorities read *God only-begotten.*" Before noticing these ancient authorities, we would direct attention to the evidence respecting this reading, which is open to all readers of the Bible. In most subjects of dispute there are many arguments of various kinds. When some are based on what is clear, certain, and appreciable by all; and others on what is obscure, doubtful, and intelligible to few; it is most reasonable to begin with the former. The Internal evidence for any reading is its fitness to the context and scope; its agreement with the writer's language and statements, and with other contemporary or preceding writings; the improbability of its being an accidental error, or a supposed emendation; and the explanation which it gives of other readings. Internal evidence, if taken for that which is *internal* to the reader—agreement with peculiar tastes and opinions—is no doubt of small value. But the evidence which is *internal* to the



*text*, is of all evidences the nearest, clearest, and surest; and it is fundamental to all others. There is no reason for supposing that ancient copyists disparaged *internal* evidence, as some modern critics do; but it is certain that they used it wisely and unwisely. By the exclusive use of *external* evidence, new errors will be avoided, but old errors will be retained.\*

#### I.—INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

1. The first thing to be observed of the reading *only-begotten God* is, that there is nothing like it in the Gospel, or in any writings of S. John. The adjective stands once by itself (i. 14), and three times with Son (iii. 16, 18; 1 Ep. iv. 9), and it is applied to Jesus Christ only by this apostle. It is therefore probable that "Son" belongs also to ver. 18, being the full expression of what is implied in ver. 14. Mention is made in the Gospel of "the *only* God." When accused by Judæans of placing himself on a level with God, Jesus replied, that they were not "seeking honour from the *only* God" (v. 44); and in prayer He addressed the Father as "the *only* true God," by whom He was sent (xvii. 3). There is a critical canon, that a *rare* reading may be preferable to the common; but its *rarity* can be no reason for preference. It will account for the rejection in some MSS. of a genuine reading, and so remove objections: but it can never be evidence in its favour. It can be no argument for a person's once speaking in a peculiar way, that he did it *only* once. What has no parallel must be on this account improbable.

2. There is nothing like it in the Bible. In the Old Testament God is often declared to be the *only* God; and this testimony is referred to and repeated by our Lord (Matt. iv. 10; Mark xii. 29). In the New Testament we read of "the *only* wise God" (Rom. xvi. 27)—"the *only* God" (1 Tim. i. 17)—"the blessed and *only* Potentate"

\* It is certain, from the testimony of Origen, that two hundred years before the oldest MSS. were written, there were many various readings, and some quite arbitrary. Old readings are both good and bad, and therefore the goodness of a reading is never proved by its antiquity.

(vi. 15)—“the *only* God our Saviour,” to whom “through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power” (Jude 25).

3. The expression “*only-begotten God*” is not found in the Apostolical Fathers, nor in those nearest to them. Justin Martyr gives to the Logos the titles Son and Christ, but apparently with a meaning different from that of these names when applied to Jesus Christ. (2 Apol. 6.) He styles the Logos “the firstborn of God” (πρῶτον γέννημα, 1 Apol. 21). By later writers the name Monogenes was given to the Logos, and to Jesus Christ; and after the time of Justin these were by many identified. But the expression *only-begotten God* is not found in the earliest Christian writers. If it had been introduced by S. John, it might be expected to appear in the writings which followed. Arguments from silence are not conclusive, but they are sometimes important; and the absence of the expression in early writers completes the proof, that the phrase “*only-begotten God*” does not belong to Christian literature till after the middle of the second century; when the influence of Greek philosophy on Christian theology is manifest and undisputed.\*

4. The expression *only-begotten God*, or *God only begotten*, cannot be interpreted from the Bible, and is intelligible only through the writings of later philosophical theologians. The distinction between the “begotten God,” and the “unbegotten God,” has been made familiar to many by ecclesiastical language, but it is not scriptural. The primary use of such terms was mythological, and belongs to one of the

\* The earlier Latin translations of *Μονογενής* is *Unicus*; the other term, *Unigenitus* being afterwards adopted from the Greek Fathers. They use the term as equivalent to *μόνος γεννηθείς*: but it does not appear to have borne this signification previously. In Hebraistic and in common Greek *μονογενής* denotes *solitariness of state*, and not *singleness of origin*. It was applied to the Logos by Philo and the Greek Fathers; but by S. John it is given only to Jesus Christ. He is called in the New Testament “the First-born among many brethren” (Rom. viii. 29); but never the *only-begotten* (*μόνος γεννηθείς*). All the children of God are declared to be begotten of God (John i. 13). The phrase *only-begotten* is now used, because this is the patristic meaning of *Μονογενής*, though not the scriptural.

lower forms of Paganism. The later philosophical use was to indicate the difference between the *known* God, and the *unknowable*; which only partially agrees with the Scripture use of the Name of God. To readers of the Old Testament the phrase *a begotten God*, would be either unintelligible, or false and self-contradictory. The full expression, *only begotten God* is still more objectionable, for it implies that others might be so thought of. The term *begotten* God must refer to the *unbegotten*; and the term *only begotten* God, to others who might be supposed to be such. In heathen mythology, where *many* begotten Gods might be supposed, the statement would be consistent, that only one should be so called. But it has no proper place in Hebrew or Christian Theology. One Son may be distinguished from others, but not one begotten God from another. In all common language the term *begotten* denotes the *derivation* of one being from another: but in patristic phraseology it is explained to mean *dependence*, without either commencement or inferiority.

5. There is nothing in the context to favour the reading *God only-begotten*, and much that is contrary to it; while the reading of *Son* is perfectly suitable and proper. *Son* is a *relative* term to God at the beginning of the verse, and a *correlative* to Father at the end; but *God only-begotten* is neither. This would require at the commencement of the verse, *God unbegotten*. The Son is distinguished from the children of God mentioned in ver. 12, in that He only has the perfect knowledge of God, and is above and over all other sons. Jesus declared that He alone had "seen the Father" (vi. 46), and had received from the Father "authority over all mankind" (xvii. 2). The expressions *unbegotten God* and *only-begotten God* are common in patristic phraseology, but neither of them can be found in the Bible.

The statements which precede ver. 14 plainly refer to the Logos, the Word, the Creator of the world: but the statements which follow ver. 14 plainly refer to Jesus Christ, as seen by men and conversing with them. To Him the

testimony of the prophet refers (ver. 15), from Him the apostles received grace and truth (ver. 16), and His ministry is compared with that of Moses (ver. 17). The verses which follow the 18th, repeat and enlarge the testimony of the prophet John, declaring that the man Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God (ver. 30, 34, 45, 49). According to the context before and after, the statement of ver. 18 refers to the highest knowledge of God, the Creator and the Father, now given through the Son Jesus Christ; and not to the whole knowledge of God, the Incomprehensible, given to men from the beginning through the Logos, the Word. The revelation in Jesus Christ is added to that given in Nature, as His teaching is added to that of Moses (ver. 17). The statements of ver. 14 which declare the new connection of the Logos with humanity, thus unite all that precedes with all that follows. In ver. 14 the Logos is not identified with the Monogenes; but the glory of the former is said to be as that seen in the latter; and this follows from the union of the Divine and the Human. It is certain that Jesus Christ is referred to in ver. 18; but while He is very often in the Gospel called the Son, in not one passage is He styled the Logos, or the Word, or described as the Creator of all.

The evident *suitableness* of the reading for Son, is said to *account* for its introduction in so many MSS.: but this assumes that it was not in the original. Surely the more suitable reading is more likely to come from the evangelist, whose high qualifications are known, than from any unknown copyists.\*

\* It has been supposed by many that in verse 14 the name Monogenes is given to the Logos; but this has never been shown; and the Logos is never in the Bible called Monogenes, or Son. This verse has two parts, the subject of the first being the Logos, and that of the second being the apostles; and no parenthesis is required or proper. In each part there are two principal terms, and of these the Logos is declared to be God in verse 1, and the Father is God throughout the New Testament. Therefore the two other terms are most consistently associated,—the general term for humanity in the one (*σάρξ*) agrees with the definite term Monogenes in the other. This is confirmed by the comparative particle. The glory of the Logos is as that seen in the Son who is alone; as the glory of God is

6. The received reading needs nothing to account for it ; it could not be a supposed emendation, and it naturally gave occasion to the other reading. The term *Monogenes* is used five times by S. John—three times with Son expressed, and once alone, Son being suggested by the mention of *children* in ver. 12, and also by the associated term Father. It might therefore be expected that the same subject would be referred to in the other passage : what is understood with the adjective in ver. 14, being expressed in ver. 18. The language and the meaning are certainly such as the evangelist would use ; but there is no proof that he could have written the other expression. This would naturally be used in after ages, when the Logos was called *Monogenes* and Son, as well as God. Both the Greek and the Latin Fathers frequently thus wrote of the Logos, though all the latter and several of the former used only the received text in the Gospel. This general usage is admitted by all, and by Dr. Hort attributed to the influence of some early creeds. They who identified the Logos with the *Monogenes*, and habitually wrote the "only-begotten God," would naturally add the name of God to that of Son, as an explanation ; or substitute the former for the latter, as more definite. That this should be done in a few cases is surely much more probable, than that the contrary change should be made in very many MSS.

as that seen in Jesus Christ—the image of the invisible God. (2 Cor. iv. 4, Col. i. 15). That the glory of the Logos is as that seen in the Son, Jesus Christ, is a simple, scriptural, and important addition to the preceding statements ; but that the glory of the Logos, by whom all things came, was as that of an only son, gives little instruction. Dr. Hort urges in support of the reading "only-begotten God," that, without this, the Logos is not in the Introduction identified with the Son. This is quite true, but it seems to be a conclusive argument against the proposed reading. The names Logos, and God, are not in the Gospel given to Jesus Christ ; nor is the creation of all things attributed to Him by the evangelist. The Logos who is identified with God in verse 1 is identified with the Father in verse 14, and in verse 18 God at the beginning of the verse is Father at the end. The Logos of S. John,—the Word which is God,—agrees exactly with the Name of God, so often mentioned in the Bible. Both mean God as known ; the simple term God being used for all that is known, with all that is unknown. The Father is in the Bible the highest name of God ; with philosophical theologians it is simply the name of Being, apart from attributes.

without any apparent motive. The philosophical theologians of the second century identified the Logos with God, according to the statement of the Gospel; and they also identified the Logos with the Monogenes, according to a system of philosophy, but contrary to the usage of Scripture. Their example was in after ages generally followed. If the evangelist had written *only-begotten God*, this expression, being common to the ecclesiastical writers of the following centuries, would not have been generally exchanged for another. As not a single MS. has assimilated ver. 18 to ver. 14, it is very unlikely that many would change ver. 18 to make it agree with iii. 16, 18. The general substitution of Son for God, would be without parallel and utterly unaccountable. But if the evangelist wrote Son, as he did elsewhere, it is very likely that those who believed the Monogenes to be God, and were accustomed so to write and speak, should put the name God, sometimes instead of Son, and sometimes as an explanatory addition. That the reading *only-begotten God* thus arose is shown by the great variety of readings which appear in the quotations and references of the Fathers, combined with the absence of its use in controversy. Besides the two principal readings there are many others,—the only-begotten,—the only-begotten Son of God,—the only-begotten Son, God,—the only-begotten, being God,—the only-begotten, being God of God,—the only-begotten Logos. There is no discussion of the genuineness of any of these readings, and all might be used with little difference of theological opinion.

Every part of the internal evidence leads to the same conclusion that  $\tau\iota\omicron\varsigma$  is the true reading. We may now briefly consider the "many very ancient authorities which read God only-begotten."

## II.—EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

This evidence has been fully discussed by Dr. Hort in a Dissertation on  $\text{MONOTENH\S } \Theta\text{EO\S}$  (John i. 18), by Dr.

Ezra Abbot in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1861), and by Dr. Drummond in the *Theological Review* (1871). A general view will be sufficient for most readers. The external evidence consists of old MSS. versions and quotations. Of the MSS. it is admitted that the greater number agree with the Received Text. The uncial MSS. which give the reading for Son are four times as many as those which give the reading for God; and the cursive MSS. are four hundred times as many, being all but one. The absence in all later MSS., with a single exception, of an old reading found in a few ancient MSS., shows that it was rejected as bad, notwithstanding its age. These later MSS. are of every class; they come from every part of Christendom, and show a plurality of independent witnesses. The same testimony is given by some of the oldest versions, both in the East and the West; by the majority of the Greek, and by all the Latin Fathers. Thus the External evidence appears fully to agree with the Internal, to support decisively the common reading. The other reading is, however, maintained by Dr. Hort, and is given in the recent edition of Dr. Tregelles, and in that of Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort. Tischendorf and all other editors retain the common reading, which is defended by Dr. Abbot and Dr. Drummond, and approved by De Wette, Meyer, Scrivener, Godet, and many other critical writers.

The acceptance of the reading ΘΕΟΣ is owing chiefly to the very high value attributed to a few ancient MSS. But antiquity, however venerable, is only one of several conditions affecting the value of MSS., and it is not the most important. The general correctness of the text is of much more consequence than the age of the MSS. It is assumed that the oldest must be the best, because subject to fewer changes in transcription; but this is not certain, nor is it the chief thing. A MS. of the tenth century may be written with more care and a wiser judgment than one of the fifth: and may have been copied from a better and earlier MS. An edition of Chaucer in the seventeenth century would have little authority simply from its date. Ancient



documents are witnesses, of whose worth nothing is known till their testimony is examined. Their trustworthiness depends on the general goodness of the text, and this is known by internal evidence. Some coincidences show a common origin, and some have an independent value, apart from that of the separate testimonies : but the evidence of these peculiar agreements is not supposed to go back to the originals. No one knows by whom any old MS. was written, nor from what it was copied, nor what were the writer's critical ability and principles, nor how his work was received by contemporaries. All the oldest MSS. were thought afterwards to need many corrections. This being the case, external evidence, taken simply and separately, must rest mainly on conjectures ; and the coincidences of a few are of less moment than are the agreements of many. External evidence is, therefore, far inferior to Internal, which is present, direct, manifold, consistent, and open to all ; and cannot lose its value by any new discovery of MSS. and readings. There are many reasons for the *separate* consideration of this part of the evidence, but none for making it *supreme*.

The reading ΘΕΟΣ is given by  $\aleph$ , B.C., probably the oldest MSS. of the New Testament, written in the fourth or fifth centuries : and by L. 33, which are of later date. The value of the ancient MSS. is much lessened by manifest errors in the preceding verses. In ver. 4  $\aleph$  has ἐστὶ for ἦν ; in ver. 15 it has ὁ εἶπων for δὲ εἶπον ; and in ver. 18 it omits ὁ ὦν. In ver. 4 B omits τῶν ἀνθρώπων, and it has ὁ εἶπων in ver. 15. The last reading is also given by C., and it has a correction to υἱὸς in ver. 18. In these verses even Tregelles rejects the testimony of the MSS. he so much extols. If they are wrong here, it is not unlikely that they are wrong in ver. 18.

The MSS. from which versions and quotations are taken are very much later than their originals ; and they are of unknown date and authority. In few cases is it certain that the reading is that of the author, and not of the copyist. The earliest writings of the Greek Fathers give both

readings. Both are found in the writings of Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen. Tertullian and Hippolytus give only the reading for "Son." In the second and third centuries no writings give only the reading for "God"; and after a few centuries it was rejected in the East, as it always had been in the West. This verse is not referred to in controversy, till so used by Epiphanius at the close of the fourth century. With the reading ΘΕΟΣ, it would certainly have been used, as other texts were, which are much less relevant. Age adds something to the value of *testimonies*, but nothing to the worth of *criticism*. There were old readings good and bad, and some found in ancient documents were properly rejected. It seems impossible to determine the critical value of most of the quotations from the Fathers, partly because of the free way in which they are accustomed to quote from the Scriptures, and partly because of the many changes introduced by copyists. Where there are such manifest diversities the gain is very small in adding a few names on either side. The testimony of MSS. is the most important part of the External evidence; and here the preponderance of testimonies is so great, that no addition need be desired.

It has always been important to distinguish between primitive Christianity, and that which was set forth in after ages. This is especially important in the present day. To some it seems a great gain, if Scripture can be shown to agree exactly with Patristic teaching. It is really a greater advantage, that the New Testament is not responsible for the interpretations and speculations of the Fathers; nor for the misunderstandings of later times. If the reading ΘΕΟΣ were genuine, the authority of a few old MSS. would stand against all others: and the superiority of External evidence to Internal would be established. But if the whole evidence shows that ΤΙΟΣ is genuine, the value of these MSS. will be very differently estimated; and no change will be made in the Received Text, because of their supposed authority.

JOHN H. GODWIN.

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## NOTICES OF BOOKS.

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### THE LIFE OF SAMUEL SHARPE.\*

THIS graceful, appropriate, and sympathetic biography is something more than the life of Samuel Sharpe as an Egyptologist and Translator of the Bible, setting forth as it does in a lively manner the characteristics of a career of self-denial and earnest promotion of liberality beyond what those titles comprehend. The author has also done well to give relief to his immediate subject by a well-finished background of family history. This history is curiously rounded within a century. Samuel Sharpe died in 1881, the last of a family of four brothers whose elder half-sister was born in 1782. As the mere history of a private family the book is full of interest. It begins with the victory by that sister over the bitterness of the position of step-daughter, and what follows even to the end is the record of the best reward that she could have wished for in return for that training of her half-brothers and sisters to which she deliberately sacrificed her personal prospects and wishes. But this family history has the larger interest of illustrating the position of the Unitarian community, during a period reaching back from the present time to the days when Unitarians were still excluded from the benefit of the Toleration Act of William and Mary, and even up to the times when such exclusion was still to be feared as a threat because not so remote from times when it had been felt as something more. As to the value of Mr. Sharpe's labours as an Egyptologist, it is for specialists to give an opinion; but even from these we must not expect an authoritative decision until they are found to have made more progress in agreement among themselves as to the points on which they may differ from him. It was in a certain manner in harmony with his leaning to frugality adopted as a principle for the sake of indulging splendid and useful munificence, that he cared chiefly to check extravagance even in chronology, and, while fully appreciating the vast antiquity of the Egyptian monuments was always jealous of a tendency to account for them by too reckless drafts on the infinite past. His *History of Egypt from the Earliest Times* is the best book we have which can aspire to such a title. Other service which he did in this direction was the incitement and aid which he gave to his affectionate

\* *Samuel Sharpe: Egyptologist and Translator of the Bible.* By P. W. CLAYDEN. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co. 1883.

friend Joseph Bonomi in publishing the hieroglyphic texts, which no artist ever drew with equal spirit and correctness. Here, again, century seems to shake hands with century as we remember that the well-remembered, buoyant Bonomi was son of the friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

As regards Mr. Sharpe's work on the Bible those who are not competent to judge him as a translator of Hebrew or even of Greek may well be grateful to him as an editor. His edition of 1881 was planned to show in the text by greater exactness and typographical distinction of paragraphs, speeches, poetical parallelism, quotations and so forth, "those peculiarities which others had been content to point out in Notes and Commentaries." The scope for differences of opinion as to the judiciousness of particular treatment is of course unlimited. But the book is of high merit from the point of view of liberal criticism, and as a Bible for habitual reading and use as well as to have at hand for reference has approved itself most satisfactorily. Mr. Sharpe contented himself with Griesbach's text for the New Testament. All the most important changes in translation which he had advocated long previously are found directly represented in the "Revised Version," which so far is in favour of this text being sufficient. He had the greatest confidence in this editor's conscientiousness and, however unwillingly, did not go behind his authority, and even Tischendorf's, to change St. Paul's aspiration that the Lord might repay Alexander the coppersmith according to his works for an observation that doubtless he would do so.

That Mr. Sharpe's proper style in writing was clear, indeed, but dry, and simple to tameness, was an observation natural enough in an age which has become habituated to being pampered with artificial enhancements of realism and metaphor combined. Again, he was true to his rule of frugality and restricted himself to the sufficient, and expected others to be satisfied and even grateful for not being detained and troubled with more. It was quite at the end of his life that he indulged himself with a little more diffuseness in short communications which he made to *The Christian Life*, edited by Mr. Spears. The result of this relaxation was to develop a flexibility at once and a pointedness of expression which go far to show that he might have been not only a solid but a charming writer had he cared to be so. One of his friends was used to call these short articles his Table Talk, and was never more pleased than when he came in time to read the pithy sentences aloud at the tea-table before the proof was returned to the printer. The suggesting topic was always some incident of the current date, but always treated with that wisest form of good sense which sometimes blends into wit and sometimes even into humour. His very last thought would have been to seek popularity for his most valued convictions by sophistical artifice. He said of Renan's "Vie de Jésus,"—"it reads like a continuation of Paul and Virginia."

He was always impatient of frivolous talk and gossip. At the first chance he was likely enough to interpose, it has been said, with "But

now as regards the pyramids." The result was apt to be in such cases that conversation was only brought by jerk into the grooves of his well-worn favourite topics. But the fault lay with those who did not introduce some subject more interesting to themselves, and worthy of serious attention. Those who did so might always congratulate themselves on receiving useful assistance towards clearing their ideas, and so long as they did their own duty to their own topics, needed not to be in dread of any sudden revulsion to "but now as regards the pyramids."

His observations were above all remarkable from their combination of the practical with true highmindedness. The high value which he set on the mental training of business did not prevent his describing a well-known active Whig as "a poor creature,—a mere man of the world;"—the very politician indeed who but a few days before had depreciated an acquaintance as "a poor creature; not at all a man of the world."

It was his value for sincerity at any cost that made him an opponent to the last of Ballot in Parliamentary elections; it seemed to him to be a screen and an encouragement for false dealing.

He took as serious a view of dishonesty in religious profession as he would have done of a falsified entry in a ledger in Clement's Lane; and whether subscribers to discredited articles signed them, in the words of Gibbon, "with a smile or a sigh," made no difference from his point of view. The status of a Bishop presented itself to Mr. Sharpe in as amusing an aspect as it did to Sydney Smith, but, unlike the Canon of St. Paul's, he not only did not covet it, but thought the very amusingness a very serious matter indeed. He was never satisfied, for all his personal regard and primary admiration, with the pause which supervened upon the criticism of Colenso; even that his criticism should have lingered where it did was trying, though he never, like Thirlwall, followed up early daring in criticism with advocacy of the Athanasian Creed, or emulated the *gran rifiuto* of the divine who put his contribution to *Essays and Reviews* behind the fire, and so qualified himself by inconsistency for a bishopric.

Of all such Mr. Sharpe would speak as men in masks, and quoted the comfort given by a right reverend suborner of insincerity to one who objected that to sign articles which he disbelieved would be to condemn himself to wear a life-long mask, "I assure you, after you have worn it for a little time, you will not know it from your own face."

It will be easily understood that Mr. Sharpe had but scant sympathy with the peculiar style of breadth in religion which was the ideal of Dean Stanley. He was not likely to set high value on a scheme of comprehension which seems to proceed on an agreement all round, that those who differ most shall take it in turns either to seem to accept each other's profession of faith, or not to be aware of the seriousness or even existence of such differences. The suspicion is excusable that in reality no difference of opinion exists, though it is thought politic for the time to keep congregations hoodwinked.

Such compromises he would class with that accepted perforce by the

Scottish laird, who, unable to obtain "a sensible man and a good Calvinist" for his kirk, was fain to put up with Dr. Robertson's substitute of a sensible man who was willing for a consideration to preach Calvinism.

In these days, when so many who have been brought up as members of the Church adopt opinions which are indistinguishable from those of Unitarians, yet are shy of committing themselves to unknown conditions which may impose new restrictions, Mr. Sharpe's tenacity of the title Unitarian was apt to be misunderstood. No one could be more jealous of the hardening tendencies of Sectarianism. He was the sturdy opponent of endowed tenets, positive or negative; and objected as strongly to Mr. Grote's exclusion of ministers from professorships as to University stratagems for reserving the teaching of geology to clergymen.

Mr. Clayden in this biography has done a service which merits acknowledgment from even a wider circle than comprises the many for whom the memory of Mr. Sharpe is linked with personal associations of gratitude, respect, and affectionate regret.

W. WATKISS LLOYD.

#### GREEN'S PROLEGOMENA TO ETHICS.

THIS important book, which is no doubt destined to occupy a permanent place in philosophical literature, takes a middle course between the intuitionist and the experiential schools. The thought is essentially Kantian; but it is Kant corrected by Hegel, and then further largely modified by Green, so that although the foundations of the treatise rest on German ideas, it is a genuine British structure, of which we may well be proud. While both schools of thought will be sure to recognise the substantial value of Mr. Green's work, and to acknowledge grateful indebtedness to it, each party will probably declare that against the great merit of the book in one direction, we must set off serious error in another. The Theistic intuitionist will be comforted and confirmed by Mr. Green's most powerful and convincing contention that the spirit of man which knows nature can be no part of the nature which is known, and, therefore, cannot be accounted for and historically explained on evolutionist principles; but, on the other hand, most theists will be disappointed to learn that Mr. Green strenuously upholds the doctrine of determinism, and regards an uncaused free choice between motives as inconceivable and unmeaning. The experientialist, inversely, will be delighted with the latter doctrine, but will hold the great distinction which Mr. Green draws between spirit and nature to be an imaginary and intolerable barrier to the infinite possibilities of physical and mental science.

The volume is divided into four books, which treat respectively of the

\* *Prolegomena to Ethics*. By the late THOMAS HILL GREEN, M.A., LL.D., Fellow of Balliol College, and Whyte's Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford. Edited by A. C. BRADLEY, M.A. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1883.

*Metaphysics of Knowledge, the Freedom of the Will, the Moral Ideal, and Moral Progress, and the Application of Moral Philosophy to the Guidance of Conduct.*

In the first book the author discusses the question: Does not the knowledge of nature imply a principle in man which is not natural? The answer which he gives is, that all mental functions may be materially conditioned, but that the material conditions, being constituents of the world of experience, cannot originate or explain the conscious principle which makes that world possible. He thus endorses the Kantian dictum that "the understanding makes nature," but whereas Kant adds "but out of a material of sensation which the understanding does not make," Green follows the post-Kantian thinkers and considers that the data of sensibility which Kant regards as the material given to the consciousness by "things in themselves" are elements of experience furnished by consciousness itself.

We must refer the reader to the treatise itself for the conclusive reasoning by which Mr. Green reaches the fundamental position that the spirit of man cannot be an object or part of nature, and content ourselves with quoting the passage, in which he sums up his conclusion:—

Nature with all that belongs to it is a process of change: change on a uniform method no doubt, but change still. All the relations under which we know it are relations in the way of change or by which change is determined. But neither can any process of change yield a consciousness of itself, which, in order to be a consciousness of the change, must be equally present to all stages of the change; nor can any consciousness of change, since the whole of it must be present at once, be itself a process of change. There may be a change into a state of consciousness of change, and a change out of it on the part of this man or that, but within the consciousness itself there can be no change, because no relation of before and after, of here and there, between its constituent members—between the presentation, for instance, of point A and that of point B in the process which forms the object of consciousness. (P. 21.)

It is, according to Mr. Green, self-consciousness, or, as Kant called it, "the synthetic faculty of apperception," which gives us a unified experience, and so makes for us a knowable world, and it is the eternal consciousness of God which constitutes both the world which human minds experience, and all possible cosmical facts which are discoverable by intelligent beings. The question accordingly suggests itself, How is this consciousness of the eternal thinker, God, related to our consciousness? Does the Eternal One by his creative thinking furnish us with those sensational elements, out of which, as Kant tells us, the understanding shapes an intelligible universe? Mr. Green strenuously argues that we cannot consistently speak of elements of feeling coming to the mind from a foreign source, such as by the action of "things in themselves." Feeling, he says, can only be a fact when it is determined by relations; and as it can be only so determined by the self-conscious mind itself, it can have no *reality*, apart from the action of a self-conscious intelligence. The self-consciousness which knows nature, and the nature which is the object of self-consciousness are not two distinct things, but only two



aspects of one indivisible thing, and hence the elements of sensation or feeling are not, as Kant maintains, material out of which the understanding organises the cosmos of experience, but are themselves a part of the indissoluble unity of the rational self. A difficulty here presents itself with which Mr. Green several times attempts to grapple, but which, it seems to us, he never succeeds in mastering. How about the sensations of *animals*? Mr. Green does not deny that animals feel, but he sees no reason to believe that they possess self-consciousness. Is, then, their feeling a reality? or, if not, what is it? It is not a reality to them, he says, for it can only be reality to a mind that can make it an object of thought, and so organise the relations which constitute the feeling. It can, then, only be a reality to God or to man, who can think it, and by thinking it, on Mr. Green's theory, constitute it. But surely sensation is something more than a phase either of our thinking, or of the eternal consciousness. It is something to the animal; for though the animal cannot think it, this inability to think it does not make it non-existent save in the consciousness of God, else it would be God alone that feels the pain when the animal cries out in apparent agony. As to what this animal feeling is on his theory Mr. Green gives no satisfactory reply.

Another difficulty occurs in the attempt to determine the relation between the eternal self-consciousness which constitutes nature and the human self-consciousness, in which, as Mr. Green says, the eternal self-consciousness reproduces itself. When this reproduction takes place, is the reproduced thinking simply due to the further agency of the original thinker? In other words, is there only one active self-conscious principle or personality in both God and man? As it seems to us, our consciousness distinctly testifies that while our thinking is conditioned by the Divine thinking, there is also a volitional activity of our own in reproducing God's eternal thought; Mr. Green apparently does not recognise this duality, and so entirely merges the human in the Divine self-consciousness that we cannot see how his system is to be distinguished from Pantheism.

Our impression that Mr. Green regards the *intellectual* action of the human mind simply as a phase of God's eternal thought, is confirmed by the position which he takes up when, in the next book, he treats of the *moral* activity of the self-conscious principle in man. In this book his inability to distinguish between the action of God and the action of man conspicuously displays itself and renders his account of the Will and its Freedom eminently unsatisfactory and at variance with consciousness. He begins this discussion with a very true and important distinction between the mere *feeling* of want followed by an instinctive impulse such as we may suppose to exist in the animals, and the *knowledge* of the wanted object with intentional effort to attain that object, such as is characteristic of self-conscious man. Just as in the sphere of intelligence the animal has *impressions* where the man has *perceptions*, so in the sphere of practice the animal has wants and instincts where the

man has objects of desire and purposive efforts to reach them. In regard to intelligence the human mind attains to a knowledge of what *is*, in regard to practice, or the satisfaction of its wants, it forms a conception of and attempts to realise what *should be*. A "motive" is not merely an appetite or want. Such appetite only becomes a motive so far as upon the want there supervenes the presentation of the want by a self-conscious subject to himself, and with it the idea of a self-satisfaction to be attained in the filling of the want. As a motive is thus constituted by the super-vention on the want of the action of the self-conscious principle, it is taken out of the class of merely *natural* events, and therefore there can be no such natural history of man's moral consciousness as evolutionist moralists aspire to construct. This explanation of the meaning of "motive" is introductory to the consideration of the question of the Freedom of the Will. Mr. Green thinks that the secret of reconciling the doctrine of determinism with our moral consciousness consists in understanding that, although motives are determined and determine the conduct, yet they are not *naturally* determined. What determines the conduct is always the agent's conception of his own greatest personal good at the moment of acting. To the position of the Libertarian that while motives of various degrees of importunity appeal to the self-conscious will, it is the characteristic of that will to originate an act of choice whereby the attention is directed to one motive rather than another so that the motive thus exclusively attended to becomes the prevailing one. Mr. Green's only reply is that "to a will free in the sense of *unmotivated* we can attach no meaning whatever." To this we answer that, of course, we cannot attach a meaning to it in the same sense in which we attach a meaning to the occurrence of a natural phenomenon, but it sounds very strange that Mr. Green, who is never tired of telling us that the self-conscious subject which knows nature cannot be itself an object of nature, should himself apply to this timeless act of the self-conscious will that category of phenomenal causation which only holds good of the objects of nature. It is the action of the mind, in his view, which constitutes the orderly nexus between natural phenomena, and therefore that which is the source of this phenomenal causation cannot be bound by the conditions which it itself imposes. Mr. Green tries to evade this objection by saying that the mind is *self-determined*, but as, according to him, the mind can only determine itself in one definite way, it seems to us that all notion of moral freedom and of moral responsibility for past actions is as effectually dissipated by his theory as it is by the materialist and sensationalist systems which he so successfully assails. The question is not whether we have made the moral choice of ourselves or have been forced to make it by external pressure, but whether it was possible for us not to have made it, and it seems to us evident that if mankind in general could be thoroughly convinced that in the moral history of each man there have never really been two possibilities of action open before the mind between which it was free to choose, all rational ground for the sentiments of praise and blame would be undermined, and con-

sistent persons would admit with Spinoza that repentance is the outcome of ignorance, and remorse the bugbear of fools.

Again, Mr. Green does grave injustice to the Libertarian theory when he says that on that theory "I could be something to-day irrespectively of what I was yesterday, or something to-morrow irrespectively of what I am to-day" (p. 115). This charge is wholly without foundation, for the Libertarian maintains that the way in which a man decides a moral problem to-day conditions inevitably the nature of the problem which he will have to solve to-morrow. He does not believe that we are free to choose our motives, but only that we are free to choose between given motives, and the nature of the motives will be determined by our character. In each act of moral choice we alter our character for good or ill, and this change of character produces a corresponding change in the future motives between which we shall be called upon to choose. The way in which a man behaves in a moment of temptation to-day exercises a determining influence over the nature and force of the temptation to which he will be exposed to-morrow. Hence on the Libertarian theory the moral history of a person is no capricious and arbitrary matter; it is a gradual process in respect to which man exercises real, *i.e.* free and original, causality and for which, therefore, he is justly held accountable.

We have dwelt at so much length on the fundamental principles in respect to which we feel ourselves unable to follow wholly Mr. Green's leading that we can only very briefly refer to the remaining books of this masterly treatise. The discussion in the Third Book of the Moral Ideal resolves itself into the question:—"Granted that, according to our doctrine in all willing a self-conscious subject seeks to satisfy itself—seeks that which for the time it presents to itself as its good—how can there be any such intrinsic differences between the objects willed as justifies the distinction which 'moral sense' seems to draw between good and bad action, between virtue and vice? And if there is such a difference, in what does it consist?"

In answering this question Mr. Green first points out that the Hedonistic doctrine, that the moral quality of an act depends on the pleasurable or painful character of its effect, owes its plausibility to a confusion of thought. The Hedonist sees that in all desire self-satisfaction is sought, and that in all self-satisfaction there is pleasure, and hence he illogically and erroneously concludes that the object desired is pleasure. Having refuted this error, as, indeed, Mr. Sidgwick has done before him, Mr. Green then argues that experience teaches that the ultimate or unconditioned good is self-realisation, and that as our true self is social, our highest good must include the good of others. Ideal virtue, then, is defined as self-devoted activity to the perfection of man. What constitutes the idea of human perfection is determined by a study of the moral idea which has realised and is realising itself in human thought and life, and as the mind devotes itself to the realisation of the ideal, the ideal attains to greater clearness and fulness. In reference to the question, how far this idea as embodied in society will, apart from philosophy,

suffice for the guidance of conduct, Mr. Green says :—"The effort after an ideal of conduct has so far taken effect in the establishment of a recognised standard of what is due from man to man, that the articulation of the general imperative, 'Do what is best for mankind' into particular duties is sufficiently clear and full for the ordinary occasions of life" (p. 341). Philosophy has much to do *speculatively* in examining the history and relation of moral ideas, and at times this speculative inquiry has a practical value in determining doubtful questions of duty. It is then shown that these questions of duty cannot be solved on Utilitarian principles, for while Utilitarianism endorses adherence to conventional morality, it is only on the principle that the highest good is not pleasure, but is perfection, that we can explain and justify all morality that recognises higher claims of duty than society imposes. One of the most valuable sections of the book is that in which Mr. Green acutely examines Mr. H. Sidgwick's ethical theory, and shows that, though professedly utilitarian, it is in substance a "rational" system akin to that which Mr. Green propounds. The gulf between Egoistic Hedonism and Utilitarianism can only be crossed by appealing from the "Senses" to the "Reason."

This notice gives but a very inadequate idea of the worth of Mr. Green's treatise. Never before have Materialism and Utilitarianism received so thorough an examination and, as we think, so complete a refutation. Most successfully has Mr. Green established that the spirit in man must never be confounded with the natural objects which science can explain. The chief fault of the book appears to us to be that it so identifies the human thinking and willing with the eternal self-consciousness that the distinctively human will vanishes; so that our knowledge is rather God reproducing His own thought than we thinking God's thoughts after Him. In morals, too, this system seems to preclude the possibility of sin, or real opposition between the human and the Divine self: and in religion it renders unintelligible the consciousness of inter-communication between man and the Father within him.

C. B. U.

#### CONCORD LECTURES ON PHILOSOPHY.\*

**I**F as Heine asserts "John Bull is a born materialist," the same cannot be said of his relatives on the other side of the Atlantic. In the American mind, "slow, sure Britain's secular might and the Germans' inward sight" are to some extent combined, and a widespread and vivid interest is felt in "divine philosophy," such as does not exist and can hardly be awakened among ourselves. A parallel to the "Concord Summer School of Philosophy" cannot, we fear, be looked for in this country.

\* *Concord Lectures on Philosophy*. Comprising outlines of all the Lectures at the Concord Summer School of Philosophy in 1882, with an Historical Sketch. Collected and arranged by RAYMOND L. BRIDGMAN. Moses King, Cambridge, Mass.

This school was instituted in July, 1879, by Mr. Bronson Alcott, Dr. W. T. Harris, and others, but the proceedings of the first three sessions do not appear to have been printed. A list, however, of the subjects of the lectures given since the commencement is placed at the opening of the book before us. The lectures extend annually over four weeks, two lectures a day being delivered for five days in the week. We are told in the Introductory Notice, and a perusal of the outlines bears out the statement, that "no lecturer is supposed to conform his ideas to what may be said by others, and there is no 'Concord School' of philosophy, except that the lecturers generally agree in an utter repudiation of Materialism and in maintaining the existence of a personal, self-conscious, spiritual cause above the material universe." The name of the venerable President of the Society, Mr. Bronson Alcott, and the warm affection and reverence felt by many of the lecturers for the memory of Emerson, link the society in some degree to the old Transcendentalism of New England, but the lecturers are of various types of thought, though, as above stated, hardly any of them have any sympathy with that materialist or sensational form of the evolution theory which finds so much favour in this country at present. The lectures, of many of which far too brief and tantalising an abstract is given, are of very various degrees of merit. The strongest thinker among the lecturers is, we think, the distinguished Hegelian Dr. W. T. Harris, who is the Editor of "The Journal of Speculative Philosophy," and well-esteemed for his eminent services in the cause of Education. His contributions to the present volume are a striking paper on "The Dialectic Unity of Emerson's Prose," and ten very thoughtful lectures on various phases of ancient and modern philosophy. There are also two excellent lectures by Professor Howison on "The Present State of Philosophy in Germany," and one by Dr. McCosh on "The Scottish Philosophy," while readers who are mystically inclined will find in Mr. Alcott's utterances a genuine vein of inspiration. Many other lectures are worthy of notice, and we may say in general, that along with some vague and declamatory talk of slight importance, there is enough of solid learning and vigorous thought in the book to excite a warm interest in the doings of this "Concord School," and to create the hope that the proceedings of 1883 and future years will also be published, and, if possible, in a completer form than that in which they are now presented.

C. B. U.

#### MR. BAX ON KANT AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.\*

WE are glad to be able to give a few words of hearty welcome to the latest of the many recent English contributions to the study of the Kantian Philosophy. This book will be a really useful companion to Professor Meiklejohn's translation of the "Critique of the Pure Reason;" for the "Critique" and the "Prolegomena" mutually illustrate each

\* *Kant's Prolegomena and Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science.* Translated from the Original, with a Biography and Introduction. By ERNEST BELFORT BAX. London: George Bell and Sons. 1883.

other. The "Prolegomena" has been previously translated by Professor Mahaffy, but the price of this earlier translation places it beyond the reach of many readers; and in the present version Mr. Bax endeavours to reproduce "the *ipsissima verba* of Kant." In this he appears to have been fairly successful, and yet his English is very readable. As to the other work by Kant mentioned in the title, this now appears for the first time in an English dress. The account given by Mr. Bax of "Kant's Position in Philosophy" is a very luminous introduction to the study of this philosopher. Nor is the new biography of Kant presented in this book at all superfluous even to those who have read Professor Wallace's biographical sketch in Blackwood's "Philosophical Classics," for the former biography presents very vividly some most interesting details of Kant's life, and especially of its closing scene, which are by no means so fully described in Professor Wallace's book.

C. B. U.

#### THE CREED OF A MODERN AGNOSTIC.\*

THIS is a small book of 150 pp., the expansion of a paper read before the London Dialectical Society two years ago. It has been published because, in the author's opinion, "it has become a pressing necessity on account of the notions and prejudices prevalent about Agnosticism, and the inquiries of intelligent young men who, unwilling to stop at the point to which they were carried by the Sunday-school, seek to acquire more extensive and accurate views of the principles of religion."

Here, then, is the first position of the author, that Agnosticism is a Religion, or, at least, offers a firm ground of principles upon which, religion may be based. It is very carefully stated that Agnosticism is not Atheism, and an Agnostic is described as "one who usually knows quite as much of God, Immortality, the Soul, as most other men, but who does not pretend to know what he does not, and cannot know; nor dignify with the name of knowledge traditional beliefs incapable of proof, and unverified by experience." The Atheist is taunted with "making a universal declaration assuming an amount of knowledge, and knowledge of such a kind, as never was possessed by any human being;" but it does not seem to have struck the author that the declaration that we do not and cannot know anything about God, immortality, or soul, is quite as universal an assumption as to the possibilities of human powers, and the extent of human experience, on the one hand; or the facts of the Divine revelation, on the other. He defends Agnosticism against being considered as a refuge for the thoughtless and mentally indolent; a charge to which it certainly is not open in face of the fact that the most prominent Agnostics are men of great intellectual activity and industry. A penetrative estimate would rather show it to be a disease of mental over-activity that has missed the central point of repose, and fails to be held in any orderly orbit for lack of a supreme attraction. As generally professed it is not

\* *The Creed of a Modern Agnostic.* By RICHARD BITHELL, B.Sc., Ph.D. Routledge and Sons. 1883.

intellectual indolence so much as intellectual despair ; which has given up, as insoluble, the problem of problems, and finds itself tossed helplessly between instincts which cannot help but inquire, and blank silence out of which no answer can come. Scepticism which still pursues investigation, and keeps itself hopeful of some ultimate knowledge, is fine discipline, and is not without dignity ; but the temper of mind which says, " I do not know ; I never can know ; inquiry is idle and fruitless ; I will make the boundary of my senses the limit of my aspirations ! "—this is not scientific ; indeed, it is hardly human.

For all our author's laboured attempt at definition, it is not easy to grasp what he means by Agnosticism. He talks about divine worship as if that represented some reality, and tries to justify the consistency of the Agnostic joining in it, as if it could have some meaning and help for such a thinker. He attributes the increased reverence and reticence of speech about transcendental matters, the decreased tendency to dogmatism concerning them by theologians, and the less common use than heretofore of Bible quotations as sufficient proofs in argument, all to Agnosticism ; which he says, " has, in virtue of its inherent vitality, permeated all creeds while it is antagonistic to none." A simple-minded man may well be a little staggered at this. Is it any gain to worship we know not what ? How can a rational reverence rest upon confessed ignorance, and a contented blank incapacity for knowledge ? And according to what understandable definition of Agnosticism can it be said to be antagonistic to no existing creed, and capable of permeating them all ? And as to the last point, does it not much better interpret the facts of the case to say that the increased reverence and modesty of theological expression, and the lessened disposition to use the Bible for dogmatic proof, represent, in the direction of progressive religion, the result of that reasonable and fearless criticism which, in the direction of scepticism and materialism, has produced Agnosticism itself ?

Mr. Bithell, with commendable modesty, claims, in this statement of his creed, only to speak for himself, and this is well ; for though his clear and careful statements would probably be all endorsed by the most thoughtful of his school, they are much too qualified, and concede too much, to content the more rash and iconoclastic of those who call themselves Agnostic. Having very carefully read the book, noting not only what it says, but what it involves, we have not been able to escape the conviction that Mr. Bithell's argument cannot be left at the point where he is content to pause, but must be followed on the path along which its own momentum carries it, to Theistic conclusions. Agnosticism, as we have hitherto understood it, says, " We do not know. We cannot know. These things are outside the range of the human faculties altogether. It is vanity, waste of time, perversion of power, sacrifice of opportunity, to inquire. The whole business is so much ' lunar politics,' and all the results of it a most gigantic and useless monument of human folly." This is a perfectly understandable position, and is rightly named Agnosticism ; but a theory that finds it necessary to use the names God,



Creator, as equivalents of the unknowable ; that maintains the consistency of worship ; that declares its capability of permeating all religions and being antagonistic to none ; that considers long ages of inquiry into that which never can be known, and which we have no power to know, as of incalculable benefit to mankind ; that speculates upon the possible evolution in man of new faculties by which God and other transcendental matters may be known sometime, but does not recognise even the rudiments of such faculties as existing now, is another thing, and will probably not content Agnostics generally, though it may encourage Theists to hope that the more thoughtful and cultured Agnostics are already feeling, and fretting against, the limits of their system, and breaking their way out into a larger realm of spiritual possibility. Indeed this last expresses what seems to be the whole spirit and tendency of this very readable book, which are much more obvious in the book itself than can be made apparent in this brief and inadequate notice.

The creed of the modern Agnostic is stated in six propositions, given as the heads of so many chapters, each of which is not so much argumentative as illustrative of the proposition with which it deals. We can do little more than state these propositions, referring for their more elaborate treatment to the book itself.

It is first declared that, "of absolute truth, man knows nothing ; nor does it appear that in the present stage of human development he has the mental faculties for acquiring such knowledge." The weak points here are the assumption that man knows nothing of absolute truth ; that such knowledge could only come through mental faculties ; and that man has not at present any other powers of apprehending "things, in themselves," even in a rudimentary stage. This is, surely, allowing too little for the spiritual nature of man, and for the religious experience of mankind.

The second proposition affirms that "there is a large body of practical truth which we are capable of knowing as positively as we can know anything ; not absolutely, but with a certainty beyond which we have no interest in knowing anything." This may be readily granted, but it is a somewhat narrow foundation upon which to make the senses, and deductions from them, the only ground of our knowledge ; and to ignore what rational Theists are always careful to maintain, that their knowledge of transcendental things does not claim to be absolute, but to represent the truth of these things to the soul sufficiently for all practical purposes, and as far as we have any interest in knowing it. Is there any reason why a man should not be as sure of the correspondence between his thoughts and transcendental realities, as he can be between his sense-perceptions and the realities of the outward world ? What he knows, in both cases, is the state of his own consciousness ; and the balance seems rather in favour of the truth of his spiritual impressions than of the perceptions of his senses.

The third proposition states that "between the domains covered by the known and the knowable, there is a vast, unexplored region of

unknown but knowable truth, which constitutes the proper and legitimate field of speculation and research." This is doubtless so, but it begs the whole question if it seeks to lay down a limiting line within which the unknown is knowable, but beyond which the unknown is unknowable. Of course the unknown-knowable is the proper and legitimate field of speculation and research, and these would surely be exercised in vain in the field of the unknown-unknowable; but supposing this latter to exist at all, which we, who believe in immortality and progress, do not by any means admit, who is to draw the line between it and the former? And is this point in the mere childhood and nonage of scientific and spiritual thought the time even to attempt to draw it?

In the fourth proposition it is said—"There are many things which we believe, but which we do not know: and we believe these things either on account of the evidence by which they are supported, or because we have to some extent the means of verifying them." Here the whole question rests between belief and knowledge, the assumption being that only that can be known which can be proved by the senses, or deduced from their impressions by a stern logical process; while all other things can only be believed, no matter what the force and value of their evidence may be. There can be no serious objection to a distinction which thus narrows our use of the word knowledge so long as nothing important is made to rest upon it, and what is called belief, in its highest instances, is not made inferior to what is called knowledge, in its lowest instances; but it is surely contrary to human experience to assume that a man cannot, in his own consciousness, be quite as certain of his thoughts on some so-called transcendental matters, as on other things clearly dependent upon sense-perception. Our author himself seems to have felt this difficulty, for in this chapter he yields entirely to the intellectual necessity of postulating a supreme power as the basis of the Universe, in such a way as reduces the difference between himself and a Theist to mere words and names. True, he contends that we can know nothing of the attributes of the Supreme Power, but this can hardly be possible in the face of what follows in the next chapter.

Our author's fifth proposition is that "the proper objects of human knowledge and belief are phenomena, that is, the forms and modes in which the Unknowable manifests itself. These manifestations, as they affect the intellect, furnish the groundwork of science; as they affect the emotions, the rudiments of religion." Is it not a contradiction in terms to speak of an Unknowable that is always manifesting itself to beings, like men, who have power to know; and doing this in two ways; in the infinitude of phenomena, and in all the thoughts and emotions of which men are conscious in their own minds? How can the ever-revealed be the ever-unknown? How can that, which is constantly being evolved, hide for ever the secret of its own inward being? Is it not simply impossible that as the nature of man elevates itself into the loftiest truths, and purifies itself into the sublimest emotions, and grows into sympathetic communion with what is most inward and inexpressible in nature,

he should not come to know, as surely as he knows anything, as truly as it concerns him to know anything, that these things, revealed to, and faintly represented in himself, are, in some infinite way, attributes of the Supreme Power?

There is much that is very fine and beautiful in this chapter, and which shows that a reverent nature and a religious heart will put much more meaning into Agnosticism than it can fairly be made responsible for, or be made to bear. The man who can so write is to all intents and purposes at one with the Theist, who knows that all his speech about God is but faint symbolism. One cannot quarrel with an Agnostic, whose very reverence cuts him off from names and phrases often used too flip-pantly by thoughtless people.

The last proposition concerns morality, which is declared to have "its origin in human needs, arising from the instinctive desire of individuals to form themselves into social groups; it is often enforced by sanctions embodied in religious creeds, but exists before, and independent of, them: it also becomes more imperious in its demands, as societies become more highly organised." This is a very inadequate account of morality, making it the result of the merely gregarious instinct in mankind instead of a reflection of the Eternal Righteousness, which is inwrought into the very structure of the universe, and, because so inwrought, grounded in the being of man, and so a part of the manifestation of the unseen and so-called unknowable; from which it may be inferred that it is of itself a quality of the Supreme Power.

The conclusion of our book is a somewhat ill-tempered and unphilosophic attack upon the recent essay of Dr. Porter, published by the Religious Tract Society, which is an attempt to show that Agnosticism is a doctrine of despair. As may be inferred from the foregoing, there is Agnosticism and Agnosticism. Considered in its extreme form of negation, what can it be but a doctrine of despair? But there is no need for so hopeful and aspiring a man as Mr. Bithell to trouble himself either to protect or defend a doctrine which every page of his book shows would be as unsatisfactory to him as it would be to any Theist, who cared at the same time to conserve reverence and modesty of expression and to maintain the right to treat the whole question with the utmost freedom of rationalism.

T. W. F.

MR. DRUMMOND'S 'NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.\*'

THE author of *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* is a clear, scientific thinker, thoroughly at home in the great field of Nature, and well acquainted with the various speculations of our day as to the deeper meaning of things. His book, after the introduction in which its general principles are stated, is a series of parables pointing out various analogies between the phenomena of the spiritual world

\* *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. By HENRY DRUMMOND, F.R.S.E., F.G.S. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1888.

and those of the material, especially those of animal life, from which analogy of phenomena he infers an identity of law in the two worlds. And the burden of the book is that this tracing of natural laws in the sphere of spiritual life, in so far bringing the "supernatural" into the region of the natural, will give greater clearness to our knowledge of unseen things, and be very helpful to those who have been trained in the school of science and acknowledge no authority but that of law, in leading them to accept the truths of religion. It is not claimed that such a recognition of law in the spiritual world will *prove* the reality of any fact in that great realm, for a law is only an ordered method of working discovered in phenomena already known; but just as now we feel that we have a firmer hold on the material world by our knowledge of its laws, than when everything was uncertain, or only dimly understood, so must it be in the spiritual world; the presence there of some of the same great laws of life as biology reveals must bring the substance of things unseen within the circle of more definite knowledge, and render doubt in these matters an impossibility.

It is clear therefore that the value of this work will depend on the exactness with which the phenomena of the spiritual world have been observed and the skill with which they are treated. For if the facts are distorted or misunderstood, any tracing of laws by which they are ordered can be of little use. And although Mr. Drummond's discourses on the laws of Biogenesis, Degeneration, Growth, Death, Conformity to Type, Environment, &c., contain many beautiful and suggestive thoughts, and many practical truths of the higher life are clearly dealt with, it appears to us that in two most essential points his statement of facts is altogether mistaken, and that his arguments are therefore vitiated.

In the discourse on Biogenesis the fundamental distinction between those who are "born again" and those who live "after the flesh," is shown to involve a new departure in the evolution of life as complete as that between the organic and the inorganic in the material world. But the question as to who are the regenerate, who live "after the spirit," is decided on the basis of the text, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life," and this not in the sense of having the spirit of sonship to God, but of accepting Jesus Christ, according to the orthodox interpretation of the Christian Gospel; so that the most enlightened, the most saintly in any other fold, and even of those who accept the gospel of Christ in a different sense, are put down as merely products of the natural world, and as having no part in the higher life either here or hereafter. And morality is treated throughout as a product, however beautiful in its way, still only of the "natural man," a fine moral character is spoken of as "the highest achievement of the organic kingdom;" as though the recognition of righteousness and moral obligation required no fresh influence of the divine spirit, but was unfolded simply in accordance with biological law. So narrow a conception of revelation and inspiration can hardly commend itself to those who have a wide view of the spiritual

facts of life, and believe in the abounding grace of God, and renders it unprofitable to enter with any further detail into conclusions drawn from such starting points. The method of the book we believe to be good; but there must be a truer statement of the fundamental facts before completely satisfactory results can be obtained. V. D. D.

AN OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARY FOR ENGLISH READERS.\*

THIS Commentary is intended as a companion to that already published on the New Testament under the direction of the same editor. It is apparently designed to appeal to a rather wider class of readers than the Speaker's Commentary, and perhaps aims a little more emphatically at edification as well as the strict elucidation of the text. Since the publication of the earlier volumes of the older work, large quantities of new material have become available for Old Testament illustration. Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian discoveries have proceeded, as all the world knows, with amazing rapidity. Investigations into primitive forms of society have unfolded the meaning of many customs whose origin and significance had hitherto escaped the ordinary historian. And critical theories which could scarcely gain a hearing a dozen years ago are swiftly advancing to a more general acceptance among scholars than could have been at all anticipated. There is certainly room, therefore, for a new Commentary on the Old Testament; and the volumes before us are offered as an earnest contribution towards the enlightenment of educated persons on the latest phases of Biblical questions. Of the piety and devout intention of the writers there can be no suspicion; but of too many of them it must be frankly said that they do not realise the conditions under which their task must be executed, and that their labour is consequently in vain.

The different Biblical books have been for the most part entrusted to different hands, and Bishop Ellicott takes just credit in the Preface for not attempting to reduce divergent opinions to a prescribed uniformity. Thus a cautious and sober introductory sketch of the growth of Hebrew literature by Dean Plumptre claims no more for the Mosaic period than that "on their entry into the land of Canaan the Israelites brought with them, not indeed the whole Pentateuch in its present form, but many documents that are now incorporated with it, and which served as a nucleus for the work of future compilers." Dean Payne Smith, however, in his preliminary essay on the Pentateuch, boldly affirms the Mosaic authorship of the whole five books, with the exception of a few insignificant modifications or additions, such as *Gen.* xxxvi. 31—43. Canon Rawlinson (dealing with *Exodus*) supports him, enquiring "who but Moses could know that before he 'slew the Egyptian,' he 'looked this way and that' (*chap.* ii. 12)? Who but he would remember that he 'buried him

\**An Old Testament Commentary for English Readers*, edited by the Right Rev. C. J. ELLICOTT, D.D., Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. Vol. I., 1882. Vol II., 1883. London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin, and Co.

in the sand' (ib.) ?" &c., &c. This conclusive argument does not suffice for Dr. Ginsburg, who significantly passes by the question of the date of Leviticus with the remark that he does not believe it was written in its present form by Moses, and then proceeds to draw all his illustrations (and very valuable and interesting many of them are) from the usage of the second Temple. The commentators on the Pentateuch and Joshua, however (with the exception of Dr. Ginsburg into whose theme the problem does not enter so conspicuously), have plainly no conception of the grounds on which different chapters or parts of chapters are assigned to different schools of authorship. They make merry over the apparent arbitrariness of Ewald; but they are obviously ignorant of the vast array of linguistic and other phenomena so laboriously collected by critics of very different schools in Germany, and displayed with such minuteness and patience in the writings of Dr. Colenso. In other cases, where tradition has erected no such claim to unity of authorship as the Church in the persons of these divines still persists in attributing to the Pentateuch, critical faculty has a little freer play. Thus Archdeacon Farrar recognises at once the composite structure of the book of Judges, though we cannot agree with him in assigning the second appendix, chaps. xix.—xxi., to the author of the introduction. And if De Wette succeeded in 'entirely refuting the conjecture of Stähelin that it [the book of Judges] is by the same author as the book of Deuteronomy,' it deserves mention that the last edition of De Wette's *Einleitung* unhesitatingly assigns the editorial framework of the book to the Deuteronomic School.\* In like manner, Canon Spence has no difficulty in perceiving that two different traditions lie behind the accounts of David's introduction to Saul, though his attempt at harmonising them by suggesting that the events in 1 Sam. xvi. 21—23 belong to a period subsequent to the Goliath-combat, must be pronounced very unsatisfactory.

Special attention has been paid, so Dr. Ellicott assures us, to the scientific, historical, and moral difficulties which perplex readers, and consequently demand the attention of interpreters. The commentators who maintain the literal significance of the stories of Balaam's ass and the staying of the sun at Joshua's behest, must at least be credited with courage. But what is to be said of the following funny attempt to give an air of scientific exactness to *Gen. i. 11* (the vegetable creation of the third day) for which Dean Payne Smith is responsible?

"Geologists inform us that cryptogamous plants which were the higher forms of the first-class [endogenous plants] prevailed almost exclusively till the end of the carbonaceous period: but even independently of this evidence we could scarcely suppose that fruit trees came into existence before the sun shone upon the earth; while the cerealia are found only in surface deposits

\* We have not at hand the edition from which Archdeacon Farrar quotes. But it would seem that he must have written *Deuteronomy* by a slip for *Joshua*. In Theodore Parker's translation, Stähelin is cited as ascribing Judges to the author of Joshua; while the presence of Deuteronomic formulae is declared to "refer us to the time after the date of Deuteronomy," which is placed in the age of Josiah.



in connection with vestiges of man. Vegetation, therefore, did not reach its perfection until the sixth day, when animals were created which needed these seeds and fruits for their food. But so far from there being anything in the creative record to require us to believe that the development of vegetation was not gradual, it is absolutely described as being so; and with that first streak of green God gave also the law of vegetation, and under His fostering hand all in due time came to pass which that first bestowal of vegetable life contained. It is the constant rule of Holy Scripture to include in a narrative the ultimate as well as the immediate results of an act; and moreover in the record of these creative days we are told what on each day was new, while the continuance of all that preceded is understood. The dry land called into existence on the third day was not dry enough to be the abode of terrestrial animals till the sixth day, and not till then would it bear such vegetation as requires a dry soil; and the evidence of geology shows that the atmosphere, created on the second day, was not sufficiently free from carbonic acid and other vapours to be fit for animals to breathe, until long ages of rank vegetation had changed these gases into coal."

This may or may not be true science, but it is certainly false interpretation. Dean Payne Smith is welcome if he pleases to explain the days as æons (though his statement that we are now living, "by the common consent of commentators," in the seventh day, must be taken with reserve), but he is not at liberty to twist the statements of the text to accommodate his harmonising process. No one who is not bent on recklessly forcing the narrative at all costs into some sort of accord with a totally different order of facts, could doubt that verses 11—13 mean that seed-bearing plants and fruit-trees were all created on the third day as well as the endogens which Dean Payne Smith understands by *deshe*. It might be amusing to see how the nebular theory may in like manner be reconciled with the creation of the heavenly bodies on the fourth day, were it not inexpressibly sad to find so much perverse ingenuity and so much pious intent expended on an impossible task. There can be little hope that divines of this school will ever realise the futility of their labours; but the question must press on all liberal students of the Bible whether they have done all that they ought to make these ancient documents intelligible in what they believe to be the light of a larger knowledge and a faith no less sincere.

The second group of difficulties to which this Commentary is designed to pay special attention is historical. But these receive no more adequate treatment than the scientific. The narrative of the Exodus and the wanderings needs no further support than such general remarks as that "Every Christian must accept miracles. . . . In the present case it is observable—(1) that the miracles were needed; (2) that they were peculiarly suitable and appropriate to the circumstances; (3) that they were of such a nature that it was impossible for eye-witnesses to be deceived with regard to them." Details fare no better. The most glaring contradictions in the story of the Conquest excite no remark and are passed over in silence; and even Archdeacon Farrar seems unable to discern the discrepancies between the account of the settlement in Judges i. and that in Joshua. Nay, even such inconsistencies as the opposite statements of verses 8 and 21 suggest no suspicion. The historical



criticism of the law books is on the same level. It is well known for instance that Deuteronomy regards all Levites as lawful priests. Mr. Waller, however, who says he had not time to acquaint himself with modern commentators, dismisses *Deut.* xviii. 1 ("the priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi") in very easy fashion.

"The fact that there is no 'and' here in the original, and the look of the sentence in English, might dispose a superficial reader to find some ground here for the theory that priest and Levite are not distinguished in Deuteronomy. No such idea occurred to Rashi. He says 'all the tribe of Levi, not only those that are perfect (who can serve), but those who have a blemish (and cannot).'"

And so one of the most important questions recently raised concerning the development of the cultus, and with it of the religion of Israel, is brushed aside with a flourish, which does not touch it at all, out of the eleventh century!

The frank recognition of moral difficulties in the characters portrayed and commended in the Biblical stories is far more satisfactory. A theory of progressive enlightenment enables Archdeacon Farrar, for example, to give free play to his thoroughly healthy sentiments; though it seems to us that he unduly minimises the significance of the narrative of the assassination of Eglon by Ehud. In other passages we are left somewhat in doubt as to the author's meaning. Thus Dean Payne Smith appears anxious to establish the literal exactness of the second as well as of the first chapter of Genesis, yet we find him remarking that "the whole of this second narrative is pre-eminently anthropomorphic. . . . It is a picture fitted for the infancy of mankind, and speaking the language of primeval simplicity." Apparently, then, the Eden story is pictorial, not historic: it is only a symbol, not a record of facts. The writer's position is not indeed very clear. He has read the late Mr. Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, and he sees very plainly that there is a close relation between the narrative of Genesis and the Mesopotamian legends. But he inverts the commonly received order of dependence. Unlike M. Lenormant, who regards the Hebrew stories as spiritualised out of the Babylonian, and guaranteed as to their inspiration by the sanction of the Synagogue and the Church, he gives the priority of revelation to the original possessors of the representations of Genesis, from which the cuneiform records were corrupted. This is, doubtless, a more satisfactory way of vindicating their truth; only it has the misfortune to be totally destitute of evidence in its support.

Altogether, then, this commentary must be said to fail in its design. It has many commonplace excellences. It is not deficient in useful geographical materials. Everything relating to the topography of Palestine, for instance, has been worked up with care from the latest investigations. Archdeacon Farrar's notes on Judges abound in felicitous historical parallels, and apt poetical quotation (though there is no need for the same passage to reappear twice in the same connection, as on ii. 13 and x. 6). And attention has been already

called to the value of Dr. Ginsburg's illustrations of Leviticus. Sociological evolution, however, is grievously neglected. And in the higher requisites the commentaries on the more difficult books are vitiated by their dominant principle. *Hæc omnia spectant ad Christum* is their pervading idea, which cuts athwart all true criticism founded on the recognition of historical development. Mr. Waller cites the reason drawn by Deuteronomy from the exodus for the observance of the Sabbath as an illustration of "the observation that in Deuteronomy we find 'the Gospel of the Pentateuch.' If for the exodus of Israel we substitute here 'the exodus of Christ which he accomplished at Jerusalem,' not so much by His death as by His resurrection, we have a reason for keeping not the Sabbath, but the Lord's day." A still more surprising instance, surpassing any of the specimens of patristic interpretation which Canon Spence cites with so much sympathy from Bishop Wordsworth's commentary, will be found in the same writer's note on *Deut. x. 6, 7*. But perhaps the most extraordinary piece of exegesis is Dean Payne Smith's explanation of *Gen. iv. 1*, where he translates Eve's words, "I have gotten a man who is (or even) Jehovah." In an excursus on the Divine name, the Dean declares himself in favour of the pronunciation *Yehveh*, which he renders "he shall be," or "shall become." This is interpreted to mean "the coming one," and is identified with the  $\delta \epsilonρχόμενος$  of the Gospels, and of *Apoc. i. 4, 8, &c.* In the language of Eve, then, in which she prophesies of the Messiah, "I have gotten a man, even he that shall be," or "the future one," lies the real origin of the divine name, and the Jehovah of the Old Testament becomes the Jesus of the New. On this exhibition of theological scholarship further comment is superfluous.

J. E. C.

#### THE WORKS OF FREDERICK HUIDEKOPER.\*

THE main thesis which these volumes are written to prove,—at least, the main idea pervading them, seems to be, that the progress of civilisation depends on the diffusion of monotheistic belief, and that monotheism is of supernatural origin, having its source in the two revelations contained in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. In support of this view the author has brought together a large number of very interesting facts, and may be admitted to have shown that, in the reaction from the old view that whatever is good or true in the writers of Greece and Rome was borrowed from the Scriptures, the influence of Judaism as a factor in the civilisation of the Roman Empire has of late been somewhat undervalued or insufficiently recognised; but whoever will follow Mr. Huidekoper throughout will find himself compelled to reverse many accepted historical judgments, to give up some facts on which hitherto no doubt has been thrown, and to adopt some very extravagant conclusions.

\* *Works of Frederick Huidekoper*. Volume I., Judaism at Rome. Volume II., Indirect Testimony; Acta Pilati; Christ's Mission to the Underworld. New York: David G. Francis. 1883.

It may be, of course, that the history of the early Roman Empire requires rewriting. It may be that Tiberius, so far from being the sensualist and debauchee he has been painted by Tacitus, was in reality a man whose deep moral earnestness coloured his entire life. Professor Beesly, in this country, it may be remembered, some years ago, asked for a revisal of the judgment of history on this character, and Mr. Huidekoper quite independently arrived at his own view; but admitting its correctness, it would, we suspect, be difficult to show that Tiberius owed anything to monotheistic influences. Caligula, again, is in these pages depicted as a man of a most loving and lovable nature, fond of an occasional pleasantry, tenderly affectionate in his family relations, and entirely free from personal vice. This Emperor, who began his reign by forbidding that any one should set up images of himself, never gave orders that his statue should be erected in the temple of Jerusalem; the story is a fiction of Philo and the Jewish aristocratic party. What our author says on these points is well worthy of consideration; but when, in the sequel of his work (on Judaism at Rome) he goes on to ascribe, not only the moral advancement, but the scientific and æsthetic culture, of Greece and Rome, to the influences of monotheism, we can only express our amazement that any one should be found to advocate a view so entirely opposed to all the plainest facts of the case. Science would never have originated among a people with whom "it is God's will" was a formula which accounted for every phenomenon; and of science, therefore, the Jews remained profoundly ignorant until they came in contact with the freer speculation of the West. Art, we had imagined, was to the Jews almost unknown, and there is certainly nothing in their literature to show that they were peculiarly alive to beauty of form and colour. We are surprised therefore to be informed that "the beauties of nature found recognition almost exclusively among monotheists." In support of this statement Mr. Huidekoper quotes Ps. viii. 3, 4: "When I consider thy heavens . . . the sun and moon (*sic*), which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?"—a very impressive passage no doubt, but one which derives its power not from its appreciation of natural beauty, but from its sense of the contrast between the glory of Him who made the heavens and the littleness of man. Let it be admitted, however, that there is in the Scriptures, as assuredly there is, a recognition of the beauties of nature, it is as nothing in comparison with the fulness of delight in nature and nature's works, which is apparent in the great poets of Greece and Rome; and although this writer quotes from Paul (1 Cor. xv. 41), "There is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another of the stars," we must express our own conviction that there is not a single touch in the works of that apostle to show that he ever looked lovingly or with real joy on any natural object. But we cannot pursue this subject, neither can we notice at length the works of which these two volumes are composed. Indeed, a writer who, in treating of "the indirect testimony of history to the genuineness of the Gospels," declares that "of all this controversy and conflict"—between the

Jewish and Gentile Christians—"not a trace appears in the Gospels," at once confesses his incompetency to discuss the subject. Of any acquaintance with the literature of the Gospel question on the part of Mr. Huidekoper, there is hardly a trace in these volumes, and next to himself, it must be said, the author to whom he most frequently refers is Mr. Norton. In dealing with the Apocalypse, he falls back, for the number of the beast, on the old explanation of Irenæus, making not the slightest allusion to the true solution; while he seems quite unaware that the weight of critical opinion now refers the book of Enoch, making allowance for Christian interpolations, to the second half of the second century B.C. Strauss he seems to know through the New American Cyclopædia; of Baur there is no mention whatever, and when he names together "Hone and Tischendorf" as two modern writers, who expressed, "in a crude shape," the view, "that various Gospels existed in the second century from which the four now in use were selected, or out of which they were formed, or in opposition to which they were fabricated," it is difficult to help asking if he has the slightest idea who Tischendorf is. But we have no wish to speak disparagingly of these works, especially when we consider the disadvantage—that of failing eyesight, to which the author more than once makes pathetic reference—under which they were composed. They contain a great deal of very interesting matter; and in particular the view that, independently of, and prior to, Christianity, monotheism, not necessarily in its Judaic form but having in Judaism its main support, was an active and aggressive power at Rome, is well deserving of the attention of the historical student.

R. B. D.

PROFESSOR VOLKMAR'S 'JESUS OF NAZARETH.'\*

ABOUT two years ago it was rumoured that Professor Volkmar was publishing his "Magnum Opus" which was to give to the world the final results of his long-continued and minute study of the history of Jesus and the earliest Christian documents. The work was to appear in about thirty parts of some sixty pages each. It soon appeared, however, that rumour, as usual, was only partly right. The work was to consist of about thirty *sheets* and proved to be virtually little more than a popular edition of the Professor's well-known work on the Gospel according to Mark. It is in one sense less, not greater, than the work practically on the same subject which we already possessed from the same hand. Yet in another sense it is the Professor's greatest work. In it he has attempted most successfully the difficult task of bringing the methods and the results of the *Tendenz* criticism of the Gospels within reach of those who have had no special theological training and who have no knowledge of Greek. In the winter semester of 1875-76 Prof. Volkmar delivered in the University of Zürich an open course of lectures

\* *Jesus Nazarenus und die erste christliche Zeit, nach den Schriftzeugen des ersten Jahrhunderts*, von GUSTAV VOLKMAR. Zürich: Cæsar Schmidt. 1881-2.

on Strauss's *Old and New Faith*. The object of this course was to place the increasing number of persons who were coming to regard Strauss's work "as a kind of quintessence of all theology" in a position to judge of the matter for themselves, by giving them some insight into the true character of the sources of our information with regard to the life and work of Jesus. In the spring of the year 1876 the Professor was appointed lecturer on Religious History, with special reference to the Monotheistic religion of Israel and primitive Christianity, at the State Training College for Elementary Teachers in Zürich. This gave him fresh opportunities of ascertaining what was required by a different class of persons from those who attended his lectures in the university, and having been compelled by the pressure of other duties to relinquish his chair at the training college, he has published in a form suited to a far wider class of readers, and especially to those who are preparing for the position of teachers in elementary schools, the substance of the lectures given at Zürich in 1875-6. Such is shortly the history of the work now before us.

In a few introductory pages Professor Volkmar first points out the unique position of Christianity among the religions of the world, as the one religion which is always guided by the spirit of its founder and yet is confined to no set code, and so is always open to every reforming movement, and is destined and able ultimately to bring all the world to true and lasting peace under one form or another of Christian faith. The history of Christianity he divides then into three main periods—the period of its foundation, its spread, and its reformation. With the first of these only this work has to deal. The documents on which the Professor relies almost entirely for information regarding the founder of Christianity are Paul's epistles to the Galatians, Romans, and Corinthians, the Revelation of John, and the second Gospel, which he believes to have been originally written either by John Mark or a younger disciple and follower of John Mark. But as is well known, the author's view of this literature is that none of these writers are in the strict sense historians. The purpose of the Evangelist, as of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and the Seer of Patmos, is to set forth *the Gospel*, the good tidings of Christ and Christianity.

In general terms we may say that Paul sets forth the Gospel in the spiritual things of the present. Christ is risen from the dead. He is the true son of David. Those who believe in him are the true children of Abraham, to whom the promises were made, and to whom salvation is now offered. Jews and Gentiles alike are being saved through Christ. John sets forth the Gospel in the form of a prophetic vision, in imitation of the apocalyptic literature. Mark throws his preaching of the Gospel into the form of a narrative of the earthly life of Jesus. Each writer has a great religious purpose in view to which all else must bend, and consequently the student who desires to ascertain from these writings the facts of the life of Jesus must be on his guard, and watch constantly to detect any signs of their having been influenced by the writers' ideas of

the true nature of the Gospel itself. Every utterance and every act attributed to Jesus must be carefully weighed in connection with the life and circumstances not only of the founder of Christianity, but of early Christianity itself. Only after such consideration is it possible to say, and not even then always with certainty, whether the historical fact which underlies the narrative is a fact of the life of Jesus or of the life of early Christianity. Of course the Professor does not discuss each detail in a popular manual, but the value of the manual is due to the unwearied care which he has devoted to the minutest details during his life-long study of the New Testament literature.

Even those who already possess Professor Volkmar's former work on Mark and the Synoptics, will be glad to possess this, and will read it with pleasure and profit. It is indeed a more "readable" book, and awakens recollections of the Professor's own voice, when he is in his most characteristic and happiest vein. It will go far, moreover, to show that he is by no means one who denies the possibility of a veritable history of Jesus of Nazareth. He is not so ready to admit all that will serve the purpose of a biography as some well-known and popular writers on the subject are, nor will he draw out the slender thread till it snaps a hundred times in the process; but his rejection of the unhistorical only serves to confirm that which is historical, and to set more plainly before us the actual Jesus.

It is impossible not to regret that one who is so eminently fitted to popularise the best results of Modern New Testament Criticism should have been compelled to retire from a chair which brought him into personal contact with those in whose hands is to be placed the elementary education of the important canton of Zürich: but he has left them a valuable legacy, and the inheritance is happily one that is open to all.

FRANCIS H. JONES.

#### NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES OF A LAYMAN.\*

TO the student of New Testament literature a double interest always attaches to the writings of a layman. First they may very probably contain some fresh practical view of Christ or Christianity which has been overlooked in the midst of more purely literary inquiries, and, secondly, they are almost sure to reveal more or less definitely the extent to which the latest results of New Testament criticism have become known beyond the study and the classroom. "A layman" in the volume before us contributes some good common sense to the consideration of the political and ethical ideas of Jesus, but at the same time his opinions should be received with some caution. He rejects the Fourth Gospel as evidence for the ideas of Jesus, and confines himself to the synoptics, but he takes them *en masse*, scarcely ever discriminating between their various and often contradictory statements. He admits, indeed, a

\* *Jesus, his Opinions and Character*; the New Testament Studies of a Layman. Boston: G. H. Ellis. 1893.

suspicion that some passages "were injected into the conversations of Jesus after the crucifixion," but naively adds "But as this suspicion carried into its details and its consequences, as has already been shown, will rob us of nearly all historic data concerning Jesus himself, it must be repressed." A writer, moreover, who quotes the Book of Acts for the conduct of Paul, and the Pastoral Epistles for his opinions, and contentedly accepts the statement of the Book of Daniel that Jehovah obtained in the royal proclamation of the Assyrian monarchs the title of the "*Most High God*" (p. 73), can scarcely be regarded as speaking with authority.

The writer has not escaped from the old and unjust custom of quoting verses or phrases apart from their context, or in ignorance of the sense in which they would be generally understood. He refers to Matt. xii. 39, to show that Jesus set down the "industrious, frugal, and devout people of his own provincial Galilee" as a "wicked and adulterous generation, of whose evil ways the heavens had grown weary," and Matt. v. 28—30, as a condemnation of marriage and the good old Jewish pride in a flourishing and numerous family as a gift of God. In his consideration of the attitude of Jesus towards the Pharisees, he neglects the important fact that the most severe, and doubtless unjust, denunciations of them are not found in Mark. An inquiry into the opinions and character of Jesus requires the most minute discrimination between different accounts, a careful weighing of every verse and every word, familiarity with the original language, and a good general knowledge of the literature and spirit of the age in which he lived. Without these it is impossible to say what really springs direct from Jesus, and what from other sources, in the primitive Christianity of that period extending from about A.D. 55 to about A.D. 175, of which alone we have contemporary evidence in the New Testament. Our author, however, has simply taken the synoptics as they stand in the English Version, ignoring even the corrections of the Revised Version. If he had called his book an Inquiry into the Character and Spirit of Primitive Christianity we could have given it a less qualified welcome. Any reader who will remember that that is what it really *is*, will find it a useful and suggestive volume.

F. H. J.

#### MR. FREEMAN'S 'ENGLISH TOWNS AND DISTRICTS.'\*

IT is somewhat difficult to characterise this last instalment of Mr. Freeman's essays. The collection includes two different classes of papers, different both in length and scope, between which the only point of agreement is their common reference to English localities. Nor is the topographical element so predominant as to justify the title of the book: "English towns and districts" certainly are there, but English churches and monasteries appear in far greater abundance. We have before us in fact simply a companion-volume to the author's "Historical and Architectural Sketches, chiefly Italian;" and it is not in reproach to

\* *English Towns and Districts*. A Series of Addresses and Sketches by EDWARD A. FREEMAN, M.A., Hon. D.C.L. & LL.D. Macmillan & Co. 1893.



the book, but only to its name, that we complain of the prominence given to Mr. Freeman's architectural notes, which appeal to a distinct audience from that which we may suppose to be addressed by the title. But if the contents of the book are to a certain extent heterogeneous, it would be perverse on that account to underestimate their wide interest and permanent value. We are grateful to have these essays rescued from the oblivion of periodical journals, or from the scarcely less penetrable obscurity (to most readers) of the transactions of learned societies. But we are not sure that it was wise to reprint them without a more thorough revision than the present series has undergone. In collected essays a certain amount of repetition is perhaps inevitable, but a man of letters of Mr. Freeman's eminence might have been expected to have cancelled at least some of the constantly recurring comparisons of the same things in the same connection which make his book often really wearisome and irritating reading. To enjoy it one must carefully avoid reading it straight through; one must always bear in mind that it is not strictly speaking a book at all, but rather a set of isolated papers, knit together indeed by a slender bond of union, but written at different times and for different readers. With this understanding, those who think they know a good deal about the by-ways of English topography, may promise themselves a variety of fresh information, lit up by that steady sense of the life and continuity of English history which Mr. Freeman has done perhaps more than any other writer to introduce into the common thoughts of every-day Englishmen.

There is little or nothing positively new in the book before us, but it is no slight gain to the historical student, who can seldom know more than a small district intimately, to have even detached essays on scattered points from Exeter to Carlisle, written with the easy familiarity which Mr. Freeman possesses, not only of the places themselves, but also especially of the characteristics in them which illustrate, or determine, their proper relation to the history of England as a whole. It is probably the shorter papers to which the student will first turn. Their subjects are more limited, and their treatment more minute. A salient feature, as we have already mentioned, is the care and fulness with which architectural matters are discussed. Sometimes, as in the lengthy parallel drawn between Lincoln and York Minsters, the examination is likely to prove tedious to those who are not professed students of architecture. But as a rule Mr. Freeman uses his trained technical knowledge simply in order to throw light on obscure points in our local history; as, for instance, to bring out the steps by which Norman influences penetrated into the remoter parts of England. Evidence of this sort is the more valuable because it is so rarely turned to account, and no man is better qualified than Mr. Freeman to estimate its value, and point out its true bearing. His remarks upon the growth of churches, the changes wrought in them in successive ages, and the meaning of those changes, are full of suggestion. In particular, we may refer to the lucid explanation he gives of the distinct character of the churches and monastic buildings reared by the various orders, the Benedictines, the Austin Canons, and the Cister.

cians; though we are sometimes tempted to think that he exaggerates the regularity and uniformity of their several styles. Thus he states, with perfect correctness, the reasons which produced the remarkable individuality of the Cistercian houses, but when he talks of the existence of such a house without the attendant surroundings of hills and valleys, as a practical impossibility (p. 306), he brings in an accidental consideration which is apt to draw the reader's attention away from the main point. The Cistercians established themselves where their work was required, and this happened to be in a country abounding in hills and valleys. Mr. Freeman himself does not pretend that the choice was determined by the attraction of natural beauty (p. 296).

Passing to the longer chapters,—most of them are presidential addresses delivered at meetings of the Archæological Institute,—we find a series of papers more likely to engage popular attention than those of which we have hitherto spoken. They are, indeed, highly interesting fragments of a topographical history of England. The professed student may be inclined to leave them on one side, partly because they contain so much that is now common-place of history, partly because they are so full of repetition, because they say exactly the same thing so many times over. But even to the student they present a great deal which it would be hard to find elsewhere expounded with the same masterly grasp. The chapters on Exeter, Lincoln, Chester, and Colchester are models of what such chapters should be. They place before us the continuous or hardly interrupted, or again, the absolutely broken and then recovered, life of a Roman, a British, and an English city, and recall our minds to the independent and individual springs of that society which we are always too apt to confuse in the civilisation of our own day which centres in what (to use Mr. Freeman's words) is "vulgarly called 'the metropolis.'" To the general reader possibly the most interesting address is that on "The Shire and the Gá," which gives the best popular outline with which we are acquainted of the broad characteristics which distinguish the growth of Southern England from that of the Midlands. But we are inclined to wish that these longer and more popular sections had been collected in a volume by themselves. In such a form they would certainly find more readers than as they are now arranged. Many people would willingly take up a book strictly answering to the title of the present work, who would be discouraged by its mixed contents, not to speak of its size, as it actually stands.

R. L. P.

MR. JOEL BENTON ON EMERSON'S POETRY.\*

MR. BENTON is an enthusiastic admirer of Emerson's poetry, and his enthusiasm carries him away sometimes into heights to which we are hardly able to follow him. Our own admiration, though it is very strong and sincere, and dates from the appearance of the "Poems" in 1847, would seem, we are afraid, to such a perfervid critic, not sufficiently unqualified. We must, however, venture to hint that

\* *Emerson as a Poet*. By JOEL BENTON. New York: M. L. Holbrook. 1883.

there is a tone of exaggeration in such assertions as that "we must go back to Shakespeare and Milton, among English names, to find an equally enormous endowment," or that Emerson is "the author of the most pure, ærial, and divinely-souled poetry since Shakespeare's music became measured and still." Mr. Benton would have done better service for those who have not yet learnt to appreciate Emerson's really great poetical gifts, if he had been content to set up a more reasonable claim, and to establish it by cool and judicial examination of the special qualities of the poetry he eulogises, accompanying his critique with detailed illustration and exposition. We wish therefore that, in reprinting this interesting essay, written nearly two years ago, he had added to its value by following out some of his own suggestions; and especially that he had undertaken a more systematic commentary and interpretation of those poems about which he has least to say, the more obscure and oracular ones. In demonstrating the existence of that beauty "which ought to be familiar and accessible to any reader to whom the best poetry has anything to offer," Mr. Benton can only have been embarrassed by the abundance of examples from which to choose. It would have been enough to cite such pieces "keyed to the lighter movement," as "Una," "The Rhodora," "The Humble Bee," "To Ellen at the South," "The Romany Girl" (which might be William Blake's); with others which touch deeper chords of thought and feeling, "The Amulet," "The Problem," "Good-bye," "Each and All," and preeminently, the "Dirge" and the exquisite "Threnody." We do not understand how any one can read these poems, all marked by the true Emersonian touch, and still maintain that Emerson has no high poetic gift, or that his style is essentially obscure. We learn to expect, especially in the longer and more purely intellectual poems, certain violations of the established rules of rhyme and rhythm; and if we cannot go the whole length with Mr. Benton in regarding these as so many instances of subtle literary skill, defying rule and precedent, and justifying themselves by the resultant effect, we find it easy to take them for granted and to allow the poet the license he chooses to take. Our inability to allow that "bear" is put as a rhyme to "woodpecker" "with strange felicity," does not hinder our high admiration and enjoyment of poetry which has throughout a fine pure strain both of imagination and of subtle intellectual power, and a music of its own in which the discords and irregularities are often not ineffective. If Mr. Benton's eulogium needs tempering a little by cooler and more discriminating criticism, it is stimulating by its warmth and zeal; and it is a pleasure to have his pretty little book, with its emblematic pine tree, æolian harp, and humble-bee, to set on the shelf near the poems it celebrates. We should mention, also, that it contains a useful, brief Concordance or Partial Index to Familiar Passages in the Poems, compiled by Mr. W. S. Kennedy.

THE END OF VOL. IV.

